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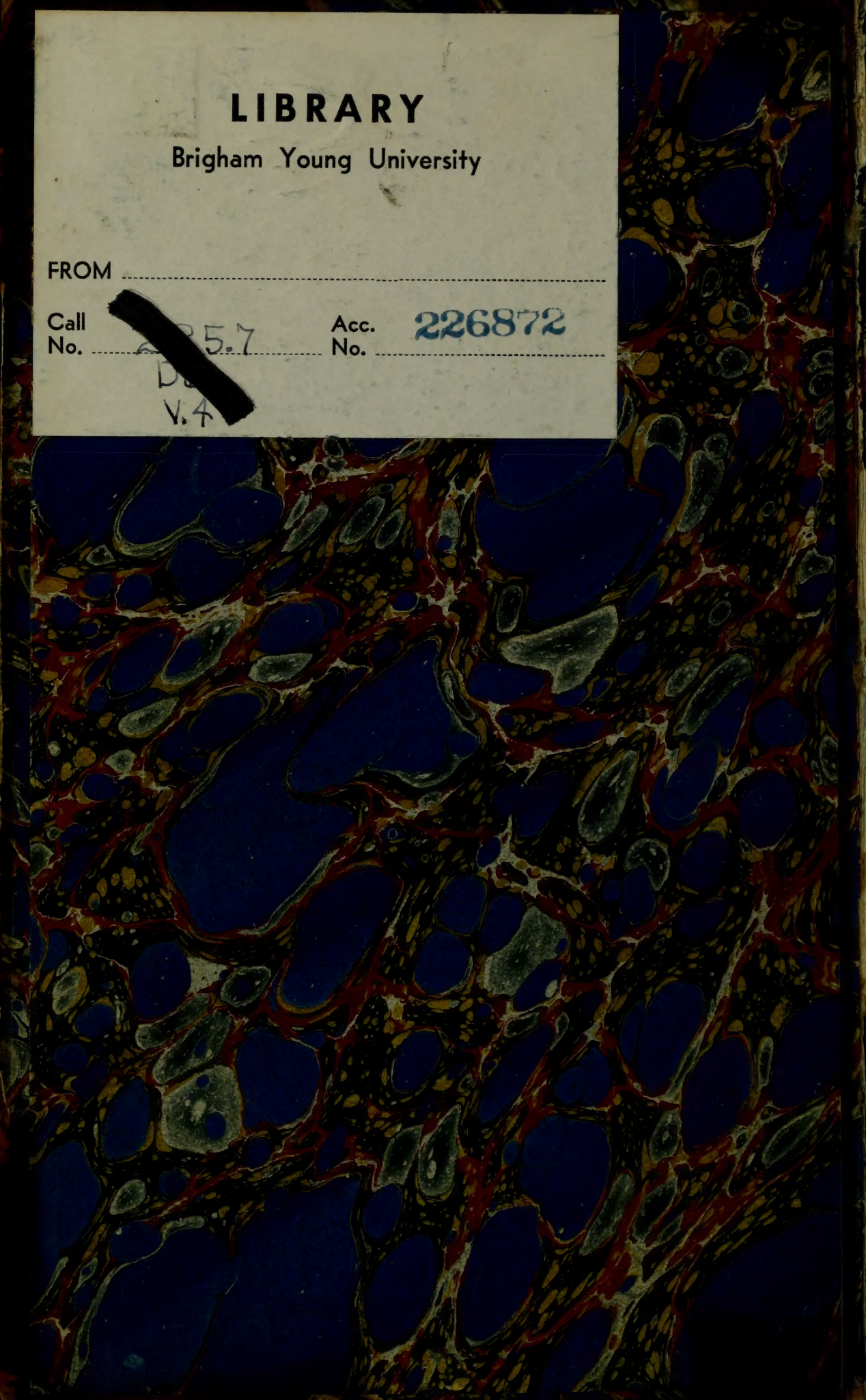
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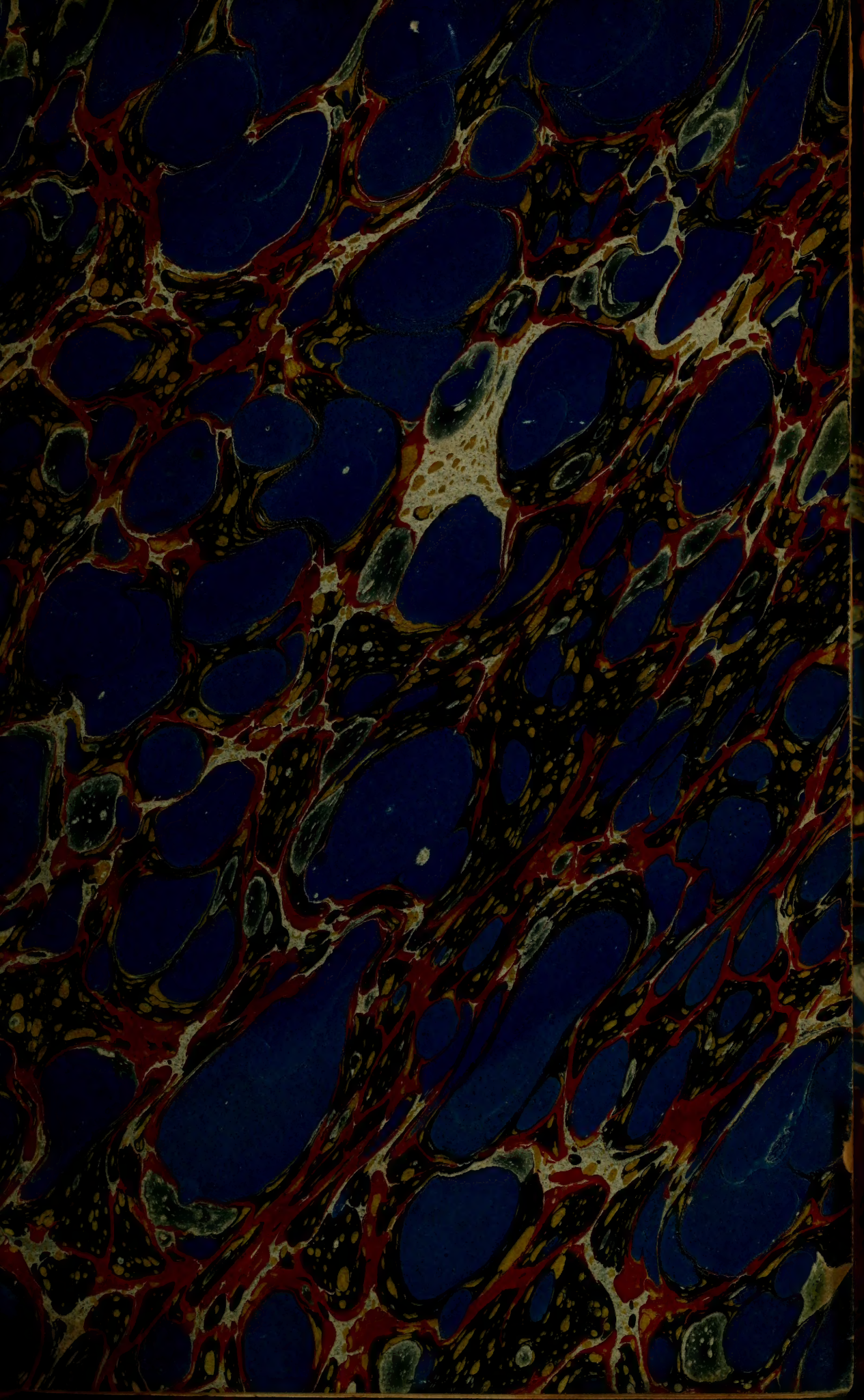
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THE
FAMILY EXPOSITOR:

OR,

A PARAPHRASE AND VERSION

OF

The New Testament;

WITH CRITICAL NOTES,

AND A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF EACH SECTION.

BY

PHILIP DODDRIDGE, D. D.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. IV:

CONTAINING THE EPISTLE OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE ROMANS,

AND HIS

FIRST AND SECOND EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS.

ELEVENTH EDITION—CAREFULLY CORRECTED.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

By ANDREW KIPPIS, D. D. F. R. S. & S. A.

Εαν γὰρ ἐπιδῶ [τινα] τῇ μετὰ τε προσηχείν ἀναγνώσει, ἐν οἷδ' ὅτι ἡ Σαυμασίαι τοῦ νῦν
τῷ ἀνδρὶ, (sc. Παυλῷ,) ἐν ἰδιωτικῇ λέξει μεγάλα περιουσίος, ἢ μὴ Σαυμασας αὐτοῦ
καταγελαστος φανείλοι.

ORIGEN. con. CELS. lib. iii. p. 122. Catab. 1658.

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1821.

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PREFACE.

AFTER what I have said concerning this work, in the prefaces to the former volumes, I have little to add, but what relates to the manner in which I have endeavoured to conduct this part upon the *Epistles*; which, I bless God, he has carried me through, and thank the public they have so kindly encouraged.

As far as I know myself, I have no favourite hypothesis to serve, nor a fondness for any unscriptural phrases; in which so many have, on one side and the other, made the very being of orthodoxy to consist. I have been disposed to let *Scripture* carry me along with it, wherever it naturally leads, rather than resolve it should follow me. Instead of labouring to establish any particular human system, which has always, I fear, a leaven of imperfection attending it, I have endeavoured to keep controversy as much out of sight as possible, and to represent what I verily believe to be the Scripture-doctrine, in as simple a manner as I could, and divested of those particular expressions, which some, who perhaps are not averse to the main doctrine itself, are ready to rise up against.

But I have not the vanity to hope I have escaped all prejudice. Where it has been manifested, may God pardon it, may my brethren excuse it, and may divine illumination, more plentifully imparted, preserve others from being led into any errors into which I may have fallen!

I hope it will be deemed no matter of just offence, that I have not always critically examined those interpretations, which, as seeming less natural, I have de-

clined. It had been endless, amidst such a variety of sentiments and explications, to have done this. Some commentators have darkened these epistles so much, that I am sensible St. Paul's writings are best explained, by keeping their glosses as much as possible out of sight. I have therefore frequently passed them over, as if I had never heard or known them. And if any should impute this to ignorance, I wish they had happened to be in the right; as it had been the saving a great deal of important time, not to have known the manner in which these writings have been tortured, to serve and save a favourite hypothesis.

It has seemed reasonable to me, when the text and context will bear two interpretations, to prefer that which gives the noblest and most extensive sense, and might make the passage in question most universally useful. And I hope this general apology will be sufficient.

If I have been less sanguine than some would choose, let it be forgiven. I wrote with fear and trembling, when I considered the favourable reception which the former volumes had met with, and that these which I now publish might probably follow them over a considerable part of the Protestant world: a testimony, I hope, that they breathed a spirit of piety, rather than party; and a reason for caution in these, that an air of authority might not mislead, or of rashness offend.

I have endeavoured to guard against excessive length in the Paraphrase; and so much the rather, as St. Paul's sentences are often so long, that I feared I should otherwise have obscured the sense, rather than illustrated it; and have rendered one of the liveliest writers in the world (for such undoubtedly St. Paul is) tedious to the reader. To avoid this, I have often broke one sentence of the text into two or three in the Paraphrase; and have had a great deal of work in the review, to correct the obscurity, which was the natural consequence of following one leading thought.

I have aimed at making the Improvements naturally arise out of, and follow the Scriptures illustrated; and by tracing the temper of the apostles, under the influence

of the great truths they are inculcating, to produce correspondent affections in my own heart. I have endeavoured that the mind of the reader, more attentive perhaps at first to the *critical sense*, may be led into the *practical use*, which, plain as it generally is, is indeed the end of all, and, alas! the hardest of all to teach. I have preferred plain and useful reflections to those which might have been curious and surprising; and proposed those lessons which I would be most desirous to impress upon my own heart.

When this work is read in the families, or closets of any who practise *free prayer*, I would desire them to observe, how naturally the several Improvements will furnish them with proper materials for this important and delightful exercise; and by such a use of them, their hearts may be more powerfully impressed with the truths illustrated, and the duties recommended. In this view, I have in some of them suffered my thoughts, while warmed with serious and devout meditation, to breathe forth the language of prayer and praise; which may furnish my fellow Christians with a specimen of the manner in which most of them may be converted into direct addresses to God.

Upon the whole, the design of this work is not to proselyte men to human names, nor to reconcile them to this or the other discriminating phrase; which in the mouth of one, may be truth and propriety, and in the mouth of another, falsehood and nonsense; according as any idea, or none, a just, or a wrong idea, may be affixed to them. Nor is my design to influence Christians to worship here or there—my design is to let into the heart the great sentiments of Christianity, and to convey them there as warmly and strongly as I could. And I hope God will graciously reward the faithful care with which I have consulted the honour of my sacred Guide, by making it the means of spreading true religion, and nourishing many souls in fervent piety, brotherly love, and universal goodness.

Amen.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE.

of the great truths they are inculcating, to produce corresponding affections in my own heart. I have endeavored that the mind of the reader, more attentive perhaps at first to the external arrangement, may be led into the spiritual use, which plain as it is, is in itself the end of all, and which the hardest of all to teach. I have pictured plain and useful reflections to those which might have been curious and surprising, and proposed those lessons which I would be most desirous to impress upon my own heart.

When this work is read in the families or circles of any who practice true piety, I would desire them to observe, how naturally the several improvements will furnish them with proper materials for this important and delightful exercise; and, as a use of them, their hearts may be more powerfully impressed with the truths illustrated, and the duties recommended. In this view, I have in some of them suffered my thoughts to wander with serenity and devout meditation, to breathe forth the language of prayer and praise; which may furnish my fellow Christians with a specimen of the manner in which most of them may be converted into direct addresses to God.

Upon the whole, the design of this work is not to proselyte men to human names, nor to reconcile them to this or the other distinguishing phrase; which in the mouth of one, may be truth and propriety, and in the mouth of another, falsehood and nonsense; according as any idea or notion, just or a wrong idea, may be affixed to them. Nor is my design to influence Christians to worship here or there—my design is to let into the heart the great sentiments of Christianity, and to convey them there as warmly and strongly as could. And I hope God will graciously reward the faithful care with which I have consulted the honour of my sacred Guide, by making it the means of spreading true religion, and nourishing many souls in fervent piety, brotherly love, and universal goodness.

THE
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OR,

A PARAPHRASE

ON THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

ROMANS;

WITH CRITICAL NOTES,

AND A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF EACH SECTION.

WATSON'S TABLE

OF THE

WATSON'S TABLE

OF THE

WATSON'S TABLE

WATSON'S TABLE

A
GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

Paraphrase and Notes

ON THE

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THIS celebrated epistle was probably written from Corinth when Paul was travelling through Greece, after finishing his tour in Macedonia, about the *year of our Lord* 58, which was the fourth of the Emperor Nero. The chief arguments to prove this have already been stated in a few words, Vol. III. p. 295, note *c*; and they are drawn from comparing Acts xx. 1—4, with Rom. xv. 25—27; xvi. 21. But for the sake of those who may not have the third volume before them, I shall exhibit them again in my notes on those texts as they occur in the epistle, and shall observe the same method elsewhere on the like occasions.

The design of the epistle has been much more controverted than its date; and yet it seems so obvious, that hardly any thing has surprised me more than the different and inconsistent plans which ingenious writers have given of it. I should but confound the reader, as well as swell this preface beyond all due bounds, if I should attempt distinctly to propose and examine them here. Instead of this, I shall therefore content myself with exhibiting (not *my own hypothesis*, for truly it has

been my care to have *no hypothesis* at all, but) what, upon reading the epistle, without any view but that of following the apostle whithersoever he should lead me, I find to be assured fact; and I will state these contents in as few and as plain words as I can, and so every reader will easily see what this great author *intended*, by seeing what he has *done*; for no doubt he answered his own design.

Now I think it must be evident to every reader of common discernment and attention, that Paul is labouring, through all this epistle, to “fix on the minds of” the Christians to whom he addresses himself, a deep “sense of the excellency of the gospel, and to engage” them to act in a manner agreeable to their profession “of it.” For this purpose, after a general salutation, (chap. i. 1—7,) and profession of his ardent affection for them, (ver. 8—15,) he declares, that he shall not be ashamed openly to maintain the gospel at Rome; for this general reason, that it is the great and powerful instrument of salvation, both to Jews and Gentiles, by means of faith. (Ver. 16, 17.) And then to demonstrate and vindicate its excellency in this view of it, the apostle shows,

I. That the world greatly needed such a dispensation; the Gentiles being fallen into a most abandoned state, (ver. 18, to the end,) and the Jews, though condemning others, being themselves no better; (chap. ii. throughout;) as notwithstanding some cavils, which he obviates, (chap. iii. 1—8,) their own Scriptures testify: (ver. 9—19.) So that there was an universal necessity of seeking for justification and salvation in this method. (Ver. 20, to the end.)

II. That Abraham and David themselves sought justification in such a way as the gospel recommends, that is, by faith, (chap. iv. 1—12,) and that a very illustrious act of it entailed everlasting honour on that great patriarch from whom the Jews boasted their descent. (Ver. 13, to the end.)

III. That hereby believers are brought into so happy a state, as turns the greatest afflictions of life into an occasion of joy. (Chap. v. 1—11.)

IV. That the calamities brought on the seed of the *first Adam* by his ever to be lamented fall, are with glorious advantage repaired to all who by faith become interested in the *second Adam*. (Ver. 12, to the end.)

V. That far from dissolving our obligations to *practical holiness*, the gospel greatly increases them by a peculiar obligation, (chap. vi. 1—14,) which the apostle strongly urges upon them. (Ver. 15, to the end.)

By these general considerations, St. Paul illustrates the *excellency of the gospel* in the six first chapters of this epistle, and they must be acknowledged considerations of the highest importance.

There were great numbers of Jews at Rome, many of whom had embraced the gospel; to make them therefore more sensible how glorious a dispensation it was, and to take them off from a fond attachment to the *Mosaical law*, now they were married to Christ by a solemn profession of his religion, (chap. vii. 1—6,) the apostle largely represents how comparatively ineffectual the motives of the *law* were to produce those degrees of obedience and holiness, which by a lively faith in the gospel we obtain. (Chap. vii. 7, to the end. Chap. viii. 1, 2.) And here, in all the remainder of this celebrated chapter, the apostle gives a more particular view of those things which rendered the *gospel* so much more efficacious for this great purpose, viz. that of *forming the soul to holiness*, than the *legal economy* had been; (chap. viii. ver. 9.) The discovery it makes of the incarnation and death of Christ, (ver. 3, 4;) the spirituality of temper to which it calls us, (ver. 5—8;) the communication of the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Spirit of God, whereby true believers are formed to a filial temper, (ver. 9—17;) the views which it exhibits of a state of glory so great and illustrious, that the whole

creation seemed to wait for the manifestation of it, (ver. 18—25;) while in the mean time believers are supported under all their trials by the aids of the Spirit, (ver. 26, 27;) and an assurance that all events should co-operate for their advantage, (ver. 28;) since God has in consequence of his eternally glorious plan already done so much for us, (ver. 29, 30;) which emboldens us to conclude, that no accusation shall prevail against us, and no temptations or extremities separate us from his love. (Ver. 31, to the end.)

As the blessings so affectionately displayed above had been spoken of as the peculiar privileges of those who believed in the gospel, this evidently implied, that as all believing Gentiles had a full share in them, so all unbelieving Jews must necessarily be excluded from them. But as the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews was a topic of great importance, the apostle employs the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters in the discussion of it, and so concludes the argumentative part of this epistle.

He introduces what he had to say on this interesting subject, by declaring that he thought most honourably and affectionately of the Jewish nation, (chap. ix. 1—5;) and then shows,

1st, That the rejection of a considerable part of the seed of Abraham, and even of the posterity of Isaac too, was an incontestable fact, which the Jews themselves could not but grant to have happened, that is, with respect to the descendants of Ishmael and of Esau. (Ver. 6—13.)

2dly, That the sovereign choice of some individuals to peculiar privileges, to which none had any claim; and the sovereign appointment of some, from among many criminals, to peculiar and exemplary punishment; was perfectly consistent both with Scripture and reason; (Ver. 14—24.)

3dly, That the taking the Gentiles to be God's peculiar people when Israel should be rejected, had been actually foretold, both by Hosea and Isaiah. (Ver. 25, to the end.)

4thly, That God hath graciously offered the gospel-salvation to Jews and Gentiles, on the same equitable and easy terms; though Israel, by a bigotted attachment to their own law, had rejected it. (Chap. x. throughout.)

5thly, That, nevertheless, the rejection of Israel, though according to their own prophecies it be general, and attended with astonishing blindness and obstinacy, yet is not total, there still being a number of happy believers among them. (Chap. xi. 1—10.)

6thly, That the rejection of the rest is not final, but that the time shall come when to the unspeakable joy of the whole Christian world, the Jews shall in a body be brought into the church of Christ. (Ver. 11—31.)

And *lastly*, That in the mean time their obstinacy and rejection is over-ruled to such happy purposes, as serve, through the whole various scene, to display, in a glorious manner, the unsearchable wisdom of God. (Ver. 52, to the end.)

The remainder of the epistle is taken up in a variety of practical instructions and exhortations, which hardly admit, and indeed do not need so particular an analysis. The grand design of them all is, "to engage Christians "to act in a manner worthy of that gospel, the excellency of which he had been illustrating." He more particularly urges,—an entire consecration to God, and a care to glorify him, in their respective stations, by a faithful improvement of their different talents, (chap. xii. 1—11;)—devotion, patience, hospitality, mutual sympathy, humility, peace, and meekness, (ver. 12, to the end;) and in the whole thirteenth chapter,—obedience to magistrates, justice in all its branches, love

as the fulfilling of the law, and an universal sanctity of manners, correspondent to the purity of those religious principles which they professed. In the fourteenth, and part of the fifteenth chapters, he dilates more largely on mutual candour, especially between those Christians who did, and those who did not think themselves obliged in conscience to observe the ceremonies enjoined by Moses; and pleads a variety of most pertinent and affecting considerations in this view, (chap. xiv. 1, to chap. xv. 17;) in prosecuting some of which, he is led to mention the extent of his own labours, and his purpose of visiting the Romans; in the mean time, recommending himself to their prayers. (Ver. 18, to the end.) And after many salutations, (chap. xvi. 1—16,) and a necessary caution against those who would divide the church, he concludes with a benediction and a doxology, suited to the general purport of what he had been writing. (Ver. 17, to the end.)

From the sketch here given, the reader might form some conjecture of the rich entertainment provided for him in this epistle, were he yet a stranger to its more particular contents; but, blessed be God, they are already familiar to almost all who have any regard for the Bible, and take any delight in perusing any part of it. I shall not therefore detain such from Paul's invaluable periods, any longer than whilst I observe, that whereas the interpretation of several phrases which occur here has very much divided commentators, and laid the foundation for many unhappy contentions, which have been more efficacious to alienate the affections of Christians than all the apostle's arguments, powerful as they are, have been to unite them; I am very solicitous to handle this epistle in as pacific a manner as possible. I shall therefore, as plainly as I can, give that sense of the disputed phrases which appears to me most natural, and briefly suggest, in the Notes, the reasons which induce me to understand them in the sense I have preferred. And I hope my readers will be contented with this; for were I to pro-

duce what interpreters of different opinions have alleged, and canvass the reasons by which they have endeavoured to support their explications and criticisms, I must turn my work into a Treatise of Polemical Divinity; and so quite change that original plan, which I hope will be found much more entertaining and useful: nor should I, if the scheme were thus changed, be able to comprehend in this whole volume, what I might easily find to offer on this epistle alone.

A

Paraphrase and Notes

ON THE

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SECT. I.

The apostle begins his letter with a general salutation to the Christians at Rome, in which he transiently touches on some very important doctrines of that gospel which it was his great design to illustrate and enforce. Rom. i. 1—7.

ROMANS I. ver. 1.

PAUL, a servant
of Jesus Christ,
called to be an apos-

ROMANS I. ver. 1.

MY dear Christian brethren, you receive this epistle from Paul, who, though once a bitter persecutor, hath now the honour to style himself a servant of Jesus Christ, whose property he humbly professes himself to be, and glories in it as his highest happiness to be absolutely at the command and disposal of such a Master. And he is the more sensible of his great obligation to this, as he hath been, in so wonderful a manner, called, not only to the fellowship of that holy faith which we all profess, or to the common services of the ministerial office, but even [to be] invested with the distin-

SECT.

I.

Rom.
i. 1.

B

SECT. guished character of *an apostle*^a in the church. *He*, separated unto the gospel of God.

I. He once indeed boasted that he was of the Phari-

Rom.
i. 1.

saic sect, separated from the rest of the Jews by ceremonial observances, in which they place so peculiar a sanctity; but he now rejoiceth much more that he is, by so special an act of condescending grace, *separated to the glorious and saving gospel of the blessed God*, destined

2 and devoted to its sacred interests; Even to that gospel *which, before it was thus expressly committed to the Christian apostles, was in a more obscure manner promised, and in some measure declared and exhibited by his prophets, in the records of the holy scriptures*, on which such bright lustre is now thrown by comparing

2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures.)

3 the predictions with the events. I would take every opportunity of promoting in your minds and my own the highest regard to this blessed and evangelical dispensation with which God has favoured us, *relating chiefly to his only-begotten and beloved Son Jesus Christ, our great anointed Saviour, our ever-honoured Master and Lord, who was born a few years ago of the seed and family of David according to the flesh*, that is, with respect to his human descent, and so far as flesh was concerned in the constitu-

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh,

4 tion of his nature: [*But*] who is also to be regarded by us in a much higher view, as having been *determinately*, and in the most convincing manner, *marked out as the Son of God*,^b with the most astonishing display of divine *power, according to the operation of the Spirit of holiness*,^c

4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of

^a *Called to be an apostle.*] As the Judaizing teachers disputed Paul's claim to the apostolical office, it is with great propriety that he asserts it in the very entrance of an epistle in which their principles were to be entirely overthrown. And the attentive reader will observe with great pleasure, what a variety of other most proper and important thoughts are suggested in other clauses of this short introduction: particularly the views which the Jewish prophets had given of the gospel, the descent of Christ from David, the great doctrine of his resurrection and Deity, the sending the gospel to the Gentiles, the privileges of Christians as the called and beloved of God, and the faith, obedience, and sanctity to which they were obliged in virtue of

their profession. Occasion will be given for the like reflections on a thousand other occasions, though the limits of such a work as ours will not allow us so particularly to trace them.

^b *Determinately marked out.*] That this is the exact signification of *ορισθευλος*, Elsnor has learnedly proved. Compare Acts xvii. 31.

^c *The Spirit of holiness.*] It seems to me so little agreeable to the style of scripture in general to call the divine nature of Christ the Spirit of holiness, or the Holy Spirit, that highly as I esteem the many learned and accurate commentators who have given it this turn, I rather refer it to the operation of the Spirit of God in the production of Christ's body, by which means the opposition

holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

which having originally produced that holy thing which was born of the virgin, exerted its energy upon him on so many occasions, and especially in the triumphant resurrection from the dead,^d which amply rolled away all the reproach of his cross, and entitled him to the honour of the first-born among many brethren.

SECT. I.
Rom. i. 4.

5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name:

This is that illustrious person *by whom we have received grace and an apostolical mission,*^e

as I esteem it the greatest of favours to be thus employed and furnished for this important work; especially since the plan is so extensive, and it is the glorious design of it, *that out of regard to his name all nations might, in due time, be brought to the obedience of the Christian faith,* and thereby rescued from a state of idolatry and wickedness, formed to the most rational and sublime pleasures in the present life, and fitted for a state of complete and eternal felicity:

6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ.

This is the grand scheme which God is already carrying on in many Gentile nations, *among whom are ye Romans, illustrious in the world on many accounts, but on none so happy as on this, that ye also are now the called of Jesus Christ,* invited by him into the fellowship of his gospel, and a participation of all its invaluable blessings. And as God hath especial-7

7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be

ly committed this ministration to me, I do therefore, agreeably to the general purport of my office, inscribe this epistle *to all in Rome who are to such a degree beloved of God as to be called to the privileges and hopes of Christianity, [and] numbered among that holy people who solemnly profess themselves consecrated to*

between *κατὰ σάρκα* and *κατὰ πνεῦμα* will be preserved; the one referring to the materials acted upon, the other to the divine and miraculous Agent. Compare Luke i. 35.

^d Resurrection from the dead.] *Ἐξανάστασις νεκρῶν* is rendered by some *resurrection from among the dead*, i. e. leaving many of the dead behind; and Mr. Fleming has taken great pains to show, that wherever the compound word *ἐξανάστασις* (for he considers it as one word,) is used, it is always in this sense. See *Flem. of Res.* p. 70.—By this resurrection Christ was declared the Son of God; but to say he

was constituted the Son of God by it, seems very unscriptural, since he was proclaimed under that title so long before his resurrection.

^e Grace and an apostolical mission.] Many would render it *the favour of the apostleship*; but that rendering is not the most literal: and it is certain that Paul did receive grace to subdue his heart to the obedience of Christ and fit him for the ministry of the gospel, before he received his apostolical commission, whenever we suppose that commission to have been dated. I therefore choose to keep the clauses thus distinct.

10 *Reflections on the regard due to the apostolic writings.*

SECT. his service. And as, in this view, I must think
 I. of you with great respect, so I most unfeigned-
 Rom. ly wish *grace and favour to you*, with all kinds
 i. 7. of prosperity and peace, from the blessed God,
 the great original of all good, who is now be-
 come our *Father*, and from the *Lord Jesus Christ*,
 who is exalted at his right-hand, that he may
 scatter down all the blessings of providence and
 grace on his people, and may rule over all
 things for the good of his church.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us begin the perusal of this excellent, though in many passages obscure and difficult epistle, with paying our humble acknowledgments to the Divine goodness that we are favoured with so valuable a part of scripture as that contained in the apostolical epistles. How happy are we who read from the pen of those holy men the sentiments they entertained of Christianity under the full illumination of the sacred Spirit,—and so learn what were the leading affections which prevailed in their minds! By these letters they open all their hearts to us amidst their labours and sufferings, that we also may have fellowship with them in those important things in which their communion was with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ.

Ver. 1. With particular pleasure let us peruse the writings of Paul, who was in so peculiar a manner called to be an apostle, and separated to the gospel of God. He gloried in the name of a servant of Christ, and let us emulate it as the greatest honour. Let us be animated to exert ourselves to the utmost under that
 5 character, since God hath been pleased to bring us, though originally sinners of the Gentiles, to the obedience of faith, and to reveal unto us the gospel of his Son, that glorious gospel predicted by the prophets and opened by the apostles, yea, by
 2 their Divine Master.

May our hearts adore the great Emanuel, who, though he
 3 condescended to be made of the seed of David according to his flesh, had a divine nature infinitely superior to it! Let us of-
 4 ten reflect on that glorious display of the power of the Holy Ghost in his resurrection from the dead, by which he was marked out as the Son of God; and yielding to the force of such a demonstration, let us confide in him as Jesus our Saviour, and obey him as Christ our Lord.

We are called to partake of the privileges of his people, we
 7 belong to the society of those who are eminently beloved of God, and who lie under obligations, as they are called an holy nation, a peculiar people, to be indeed saints, to be holy in all manner of conversation, as being entirely devoted to God and the Redeemer.

May such grace be imparted to us from God our Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord, that we may not dishonour the sacred community to which we belong, that we may not with millions be cast out at last infamous and abhorred, but may enjoy its most important privileges in that state of final and everlasting glory in which the kingdom of the Son of God shall terminate !

SECT.
I.
Ver. 7.

SECT. II.

The apostle strongly expresses his affection for his Christian friends at Rome : thereby to introduce, with greater advantage, the considerations he had to lay before them in the process of the epistle. Rom. i. 8—15.

ROMANS I. 8.

FIRST, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

ROMANS I. 8.

I AM now setting myself to write to you, my dear brethren at Rome ; and I must, in the first place, declare to you, that I unfeignedly thank that most glorious and excellent Being who is now become my covenant God and Father through Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the adoption, and bless him for you all, that your faith in his invaluable gospel is so pure and stedfast, and produces such genuine fruits, that it is declared and celebrated through the whole world, and is universally looked upon, by all Christians in this extensive empire, as a most happy presage of the general spread of their holy religion. Such a report as this cannot but excite my praises, as being so agreeable to the tenour of my petitions ; for God, whom I make it the continual business of my life to serve, with the greatest integrity and ardour of my spirit, in the gospel of his Son, is my witness, and I appeal to him with confidence on so solemn an occasion, as it is he only who can judge of the fact, how incessantly I make mention of you, Romans, when I bow my knee before him in solemn seasons of devout retirement ; Always entreating in my prayers the permission of his gracious providence to come unto you, if by any means now at length, after so long a delay, I may have a prosperous journey to you, by the will of God ; on whose blessing I am sensible the prosperity of all our ways depends, and to

SECT.
II.
Rom.
i. 8.

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers ;

10 Making request (if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God) to come unto you.

12 That he desired to impart to them some spiritual gift;

SECT. whose wise determination I desire to submit all

II. my schemes and purposes, even those which are

Rom. formed with the most affectionate regard to the
i. 11. good of his church. Nevertheless, so far as

may consist with this due resignation, I am

humbly importunate with him on this head;

for I desire greatly to see you, not from any cu-

riosity which the grandeur and magnificence of

your city excites, nor from any prospect of per-

sonal advantage that I might receive from the

most considerable of you, in the greatest distinc-

tion of circumstances, but *that I may impart to*

you some spiritual gift, by the laying on of my

hands in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ;^a

that by the farther experience which you may

then have of the operations of the Holy Spirit,

as well as the edification to be received from

what discourses may pass between us, *you may*

be established in your Christian faith, and fortified

against all temptation either to renounce or dis-

honour it: *That is*, in other words, [*I desire*]

that while I am among you we may be comforted

together, as I have great reason to believe that

we shall *by the exercise of the mutual faith*

both of you and me, while I am communicating

and you receiving these blessings, and those cor-

respondent graces are working on each side,

which I doubt not will be for my improvement

as well as for yours.^b

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end you may be established;

12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual faith both of you and me.

^a *Impart to you some spiritual gift.*] Bos interprets this of preaching the gospel, which was a divine kind of food by which their souls might be strengthened, and which he, as with the richest liberality, was willing to impart and distribute among them. But as spiritual gifts, in the language of St. Paul, have generally another signification, (compare 1 Cor. xii. 1, 4, 9; xiv. 1, 12.) and it was the particular office of the apostles to bestow miraculous gifts by the laying on of their hands, I have taken the passage in that view; and though it is reasonable to suppose the Christians now at Rome had some share of these endowments, chap. xii. 5—7, it is highly probable that on Paul's arrival among them they might receive them in much greater abundance. The great temptations which the inhabitants of Rome were under, both to infidelity and immorality, would make

such assistances more desirable, and the apostle more solicitous for such an interview.—As for the words *εν υμιν*, it makes the construction much plainer to read them before *συμπαρηκληθηναι*, as they can by no means, otherwise, have any force at all. They must therefore, as L'Enfant has well noted, be rendered *being among you*.

^b For my improvement as well as for yours.] This thought, so full of respect to his Christian friends at Rome, is suggested with great delicacy and address; and it is very reasonable to suppose that every new instance in which miraculous gifts were communicated by the laying on the hands of any of the apostles, would be a source of new edification and establishment to these holy men; as being so evident a token of the Divine presence with them, and a new and solemn seal set to the commission they had received.

13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

14 I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

And while I thus express my desire of an interview with you, *I would not have you ignorant, my dear brethren, that I have often been proposing and contriving to come to you, though I have hitherto, by one means or another, been hindered.* I have, I say, long meditated and desired the journey, *that I might have some fruit of my ministerial and apostolical labours among you also, even as I have already had from the many churches I have planted and watered among the rest of the Gentiles.* Which I mention, not by any means as boasting of what I have done; for I know that in the circumstances in which Christ has placed me, considering the charge he honoured me with and the mercy he hath extended to me, *I am, in the strictest justice, a debtor both to the Greeks and the Barbarians, both to the learned and the ignorant:*^c Duty and gratitude bind me to do my best to promote the conversion and salvation of men of every nation and rank, of every genius and character. *Therefore, according to my weak abilities and the opportunities which God may give me, I am ready and desirous^d to preach the gospel to you also that are at Rome, though it be the capital of the world, a place of so much politeness and grandeur, and a place likewise where it might seem peculiarly dangerous to oppose those popular superstitions to which the empire is supposed to owe its greatness and felicity; yet still, at all events, I am willing to come and publish this divine message among you, though it should be at the expense of my reputation, my liberty, or life.*

SECT.
II.
Rom.
i. 13.

IMPROVEMENT.

HAPPY is the church of Christ when its ministers are thus Ver. 15. conscious of the excellency of the gospel, and thus earnestly desirous, in the midst of reproach, persecution, and danger, to

^c *The learned and the ignorant.* L'Enfant justly observes that σοφοί often signifies *learned*, (compare 1 Cor. i. 20, &c.) and consequently ἀνοήτοι must signify *ignorant*, or those whose understandings had not been improved by cultivation. And it is well known that the literati or sages of antiquity were anciently called σοφοί.

See ver. 22; 1 Cor. ii. 4; iii. 20; and σοφία plainly signifies *learning*, Mat. xiii. 54; Mark vi. 2; Acts vii. 22.

^d *Ready and desirous.* Raphelius shows that προθυμὸν expresses not only a *readiness*, but, in some cases, an *eagerness of desire*. Not. ex Herod.

SECT. extend its triumphs; when they can thus appeal to God that it
 II. is with their spirit that they serve him in the gospel of his Son.

Ver. This will give them a largeness of heart well becoming their
 9, 10 office: Devotion will then flourish in their sacred retirements,
 as well as be maintained by them in public assemblies; and the
 concerns of the churches, and sometimes of far-distant churches,
 will have a place in their thoughts and prayers at such solemn
 seasons.

May they ever remember, that as the servants of Christ they
 are to be the friends of mankind, and that their Master has laid
 14 such obligations upon them, that for his sake they are debtors
 to the whole world in every office of Christian friendship, and
 11 especially as to any spiritual gift which by their ministration
 they may be instrumental in imparting. The more they exert
 themselves in such services, the more will their own faith and
 12 comfort, as well as that of their people, be confirmed.

But in whatever station we are, let us be forming schemes for
 the service of God and good of men, projecting our journeys
 10 and visits on that plan, yet always with a becoming sense of our
 dependence on the smiles of heaven for prosperity and success;
 and, as dutiful children, referring it to the infinitely superior wis-
 dom of our heavenly Father to put a negative, at his sacred
 pleasure, upon those purposes which lie nearest to our hearts,
 and in which we most sincerely intend his glory.

SECT. III.

The apostle declares his readiness boldly to preach the gospel at Rome, supported by a sense of its excellency; to illustrate which, he shows that the world greatly needed such a dispensation. And first he introduces a discourse of the abandoned state into which the Gentiles were fallen. Rom. i. 16—32.

ROMANS I. 16.

SECT. I HAVE told you (ver. 15.) that I am ready and
 III. desirous to preach the gospel at Rome, though
 the capital city of the world; and indeed there
 Rom. is nothing that I more earnestly wish than op-
 i. 16. portunities of bearing the most public testimony
 to it; for with whatever contempt that sacred
 dispensation, and they who publish it, may be
 treated on account of the circumstances and
 death of its Founder, the character of its minis-
 ters, and the nature and tendency of its doc-
 trines, *I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,*

ROMANS I. 16.

FOR I am not a-
 shamed of the gos-
 pel of Christ; for it is

the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

but rather glory in it. And I have great reason to do it; for while other methods intended to promote the reformation and happiness of mankind have been all ineffectual, it has clearly appeared that this is the power of God for complete and eternal salvation to every one that believeth: It contains the most glorious display of the Divine power, efficaciously exerted for this important purpose, and operating in favour of every one who cordially embraces it. Thus salutary is it to the Jew, who is far from being above the need of it, and to whom, by the special command of our Lord, it is to be first preached and proposed,^a wherever its ambassadors come; yet not to be limited to him, but proclaimed also to the Greek and the Roman, and Gentiles of every nation under heaven, who are all, with equal freedom, invited to partake its important benefits. And it is admirably adapted to secure this great and blessed end; for in it the righteousness of God^b by faith, that is, the method which God hath contrived and proposed for our becoming righteous, (Isa. lvi. 1,) by believing his testimony and casting ourselves on his mercy, is revealed to our faith,^c and most clearly exhibited as the great object of it: As it is written in the prophet Habak-

SECT.
III.
Rom.
i. 16.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it

^a To the Jew first, &c.] There is a noble frankness, as well as very comprehensive sense, in these few words of the apostle; by which, on the one hand, he strongly insinuates to the Jews their absolute need of the gospel in order to salvation; and on the other, while he declares to them that it was also to be preached to the Gentiles, he tells the politest and greatest of those nations to whom he might come as an ambassador of Christ, both that their salvation also depended upon receiving it, and that the first offers of it were every where to be made to the despised Jews.

^b The righteousness of God.] Δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ plainly signifies, in several passages of this epistle, not the essential righteousness of God's nature, but the manner of becoming righteous which God hath appointed and exhibited in the gospel. Compare chap. iii. 21, 22; x. 3; and also Phil. iii. 9. with Mat. vi. 33. And the phrase may perhaps have the same sense

in several passages of the Old Testament. See Isa. xlv. 13; li. 5, 6, 8; lvi. 1. Mr. Mace generally renders it the divine justification, yet cannot always render δικαιοσύνη so.

^c By faith is revealed to faith.] I would connect ἐκ πίστεως with Δικαιοσύνη, and suppose ἐς πίστιν to be governed of ἀποκαλυπτεσθαι, thinking the transposition easier than the interpretation given by many others, as if it implied its being wholly by faith, as Mr. Mace renders it, or going on from one degree of faith to another; for though it is true that this is the case, I find no example in which the phrase is used in either of these senses, those which Mr. Locke produces to justify the former of these interpretations (viz. chap. vi. 19. and 2 Cor. iii. 18,) being by no means exactly parallel. And it is so plain that ἐκ πίστεως in the close of this verse signifies by faith, that I wonder it should have been rendered so differently in the former clause.

SECT. kuk, chap. ii. 4. "*The just shall live by faith;*"^d is written, The just shall live by faith.

III. and as good men were then delivered from the ruin which involved others, by trusting to and acting upon the Divine declaration; so now the like principle of faith, receiving and embracing this great discovery which God hath made of his mercy in Christ, secures our life and salva-

Rom.
i. 17.

18 tion. And in this view it is well worthy of our regard, so there is an absolute necessity of its being attended to; *for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven*^e by many singular interpositions of Divine Providence, and especially by the most express declaration of the sacred oracles, which teach us to look on the grand and final revelation of it as nearly approaching. And the terrors of this wrath are apparently levelled against all impiety and unrighteousness of men, who wickedly restrain the truth in unrighteousness, when that heaven-born Captive would exert its energy upon their minds, and urge them to obey its dictates. This is, more or less, the generally prevailing character; and it exposes men to a sentence, the terrors of which, if they were well understood, would soon drive them, with the greatest solicitude, to seek their refuge in that gospel the tidings of which they now so arrogantly despise.

19 The sad character I hinted at above, of restraining and imprisoning the truth in unrighteousness, is more general than mankind are

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

19 Because that

^d As it is written, *The just shall live by faith.*] The prophet Habakkuk, speaking of the destruction to come upon Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, observes how different the behaviour and states of good and bad men would be. The sinner's heart would be vainly lifted up to his destruction, while trusting to his own wisdom and power, (and accordingly prince and people became the sacrifices of this foolish self-confidence;) whereas the righteous, the truly good man, would preserve his life by believing the Divine declarations, and acting according to them; and thus under the gospel, he that believes shall live. Some would render it, *The just by faith shall live*, or *he shall live who is justified by faith*; but however this might suit the Greek phrase, it seems less agreeable to the Hebrew, from whence it is taken.

^e *For the wrath of God is revealed, &c.*] Commentators differ much in fixing the connection of these words.—Some have considered this verse as another reason why he was not ashamed of the gospel, because it contained so awakening a declaration of the wrath of God against sin, and by that means had a most powerful tendency to awaken men's consciences and save their souls: in which view, some treating the particle *yaq* as an expletive, have rendered it *there the wrath of God is revealed*. And Mr. Locke brings it nearly to the same, where he explains it as a reason why Paul was so ready to preach the gospel at Rome.—But the connection hinted in the paraphrase seems most rational and natural. The sentences in Paul's writings often run into each other.

which may be known of God, is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them.

aware. We find it not only among those who have enjoyed the benefit of a revelation from God, but in all the Gentile nations. For the main fundamental principles of *what is* by any means *to be known of God*, that is, that he is the great Original of all, *is manifest among them; for God hath showed it to them* by a light universal as the sun. For those things of him which ²⁰ *are invisible, are and have been, from the very creation of the world, not only intimated, but being duly attended to,^f clearly seen by the things which are made;* the whole system of which bears such eminent signatures of the great Artificer, as loudly to proclaim his name and attributes, *even his eternal power and divinity;^g so that if any of the Gentile nations neglect to trace it with reverence, love, and obedience, they are without excuse, and would be destitute of every just or plausible apology for themselves if he should enter into judgment with them: Because knowing God^h as the great²¹ Former of all, and a Being of supreme and incomparable perfection, they have not adored and glorified [him] as God their Maker, neither were duly thankfulⁱ to him as their great and constant Benefactor, but acted as if they had neither opportunity nor capacity of acquainting themselves with him. This has generally been the character of the Gentiles, without excepting those of the politest ages and most learned nations. Instead of setting themselves to inquire*

SECT.
III.
Rom.
i. 19.

²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead; so that they are without excuse:

²¹ Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful,

^f *Being duly attended to.*] *Νομίζοντα* seems to have this signification, and to be, as it were, included in a parenthesis; so that *τοῖς ποιήμασι* is governed of *καθορᾶται*.

^g *Divinity.*] It is observable that Augustin (Civ. Dei, vii. 1.) nicely distinguishes between *θεοτης* and *θειοτης*, the word here used; maintaining that the one signifies *deity*, or *divine nature*, the other *divinity*, or *divine majesty and glory*: and if there be that distinction, the latter word is apparently more proper here, as divine glory results from that eternal power which is comprehended in the divine nature.

^h *Knowing God.*] Some understand it as if he had said, *Whereas they might have known God*; but I think what Paul charges upon the philosophers is, that

though they actually knew there was one supreme God, they neglected him to conform (for low and base considerations) to the established idolatry; which was really the case, to their aggravated guilt and condemnation; as appears from most of the passages in which the Pagan writers bear a testimony to the doctrine of the Unity; a specimen of which may be seen in Dr. Sykes's Connect. chap. xiv. p. 364—383; Dr. Ab. Taylor, of Faith, p. 12—17, note; and Cudworth's Intellect. System, chap. iv. § 10—31, especially sect. 19—28.

ⁱ *Neither were thankful.*] It is worthy our observation that gratitude to God is here put for the whole of religion; and no principle can be nobler, and none stronger or more extensive.

SECT. into the will of the Supreme Being, and with

but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

III. becoming gratitude and zeal devoting themselves to his service, *they became vain and*

Rom
i. 21.

foolish in their boasted reasonings,^k entangling themselves with a thousand unprofitable subtilties which only tended to alienate their souls from every sentiment of true religion; and their unintelligent heart, instead of being enlightened by these sophistries, was more and more involved in darkness, and rendered impenetrable to the simplicity of the most important

22 truths. So that *professing themselves to be wise* far beyond the common pitch, assuming and glorying in the title of *sages* or wise men, at least in that of lovers of wisdom,^l *they became fools* and idiots, degrading, in the lowest and most infamous manner, the reason which they so arrogantly pretended to improve, and al-

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools:

23 most to engross. And as this was evident in a variety of other vices in which the philosophers of heathen nations joined with the vulgar, so particularly in the early and almost universal prevalence of idolatry amongst them, by which *they changed the glory of the immortal, incorruptible, and eternal God*, even all the majestic splendours in which he shines forth through earth and heaven, *into the representing image of mortal and corruptible man*; which, how elegantly soever it might be traced, was a great and insufferable degradation, had their folly proceeded no farther: But not content with this, they set up as emblems of deity and objects of worship, brutes and their images, birds and four-footed animals, and even such vile reptiles as beetles and various kinds of serpents which creep on the dust.^m

23 And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

^k *Vain in their reasonings*: ἐμαλίσθησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν.] Mr. Locke illustrates this by the stupid folly of their idolatry, 2 Kings xvii. 15, 16; Acts xiv. 15. But I rather think the word διαλογισμοῖς refers to the perplexing sophistry of the philosophers. I have often thought Lucretius one of the most remarkable illustrations of the character here drawn. What vain reasonings, and how dark a heart, in the midst of the most pompous profession of oracular wisdom!

^l *Professing themselves.*] Φαυκόντες ἑαυτοὺς σοφοὶ seems just equivalent to Xenophon's φαυκόντας φιλοσοφεῖν, which so evidently refers to the pride they took in the title of lovers of wisdom. See Raphael. in loc.

^m Beetles and serpents.] Of this amazingly stupid, yet prevalent idolatry, the worship of serpents, see Jenk. Reas. of Christianity, Vol. II. p. 246—248; Tennyson of Idol. chap. xiv. p. 352—354; Owen on Serp. chap. iv. and v. Stillingf. Orig. Sac. p. 516, &c.

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections. For even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

27 And likewise also the men, leaving

This was such scandalous and pernicious superstition, that it is no wonder that God should in righteous judgment withdraw from those who introduced and encouraged it. He therefore not only left them to sink lower and lower in these absurd methods of worship, but also delivered them up to the vilest uncleanness in [gratifying] the detestable lusts of their own heart, which grew more and more outrageous and enormous when the restraint of his common influences was thus withdrawn from their minds. Thus he left them to dishonour their bodies among themselves, as much as they had before dishonoured their rational faculties by such senseless idolatries. This was so prevalent an evil, that even many of them who knew much better, and had in their own minds sounder apprehensions of things, yet from mere secular motives suppressed that better knowledge, and conformed to popular superstitions and follies, and thereby changed the truth of God, the true doctrines of his nature and genuine institutions of his worship, into a lie,ⁿ into abominable idolatries, founded on the falsest representations of God, and often supported by a train of artful forgeries; and upon the whole, they worshipped and served, with religious homage and solemn devotion, the creature, to the neglect of the great Creator, who, however basely and ungratefully overlooked by men, is surrounded with the perpetual homage of the heavenly world, and blessed for ever. Amen! May he ever be held in the highest veneration by all his creatures in heaven and earth, throughout all succeeding ages!

Therefore, I say, because of this inexcusable neglect of the ever-blessed God, he abandoned them to the most infamous passions; for even their women, from whom the strictest modesty might reasonably have been expected, changed the natural use of the other sex to that which is against nature.^o And likewise their males, 27

ⁿ Changed the truth of God into a lie.] Elsner takes great pains to show that the truth of God here signifies what he really was, and a lie a false representation. See Elsner's Observ. Vol. II. p. 11. It is well known that idols are often called

lies. Isa. xlv. 20; Jerem. iii. 23; xiii. 25; xvi. 19.

^o To that which is against nature.] Many horrible illustrations of this may be seen in Bos, Exercit. in loc.

SECT.

III.

Rom.
i. 24.

SECT. leaving the natural use of the female, have been
 III. inflamed with the most scandalous and abomi-
 nable desires towards each other, males with males
 Rom. i. 27. perpetrating that which is most shameful to
 mention and detestable to think of, and receiv-
 ing in themselves the just recompense of their
 error, in that stupidity and degeneracy of mind

28 to which they were evidently left. And thus,

upon the whole, as they were not solicitous^p to re-
 tain God in their knowledge, nor to propagate
 suitable conceptions of him, or address him by
 proper acts of rational and pure devotion, God
 delivered them over to an undiscerning mind, to
 do things most inexpedient^q and enormous, as
 he cannot more dreadfully punish one sin than

29 by giving up the offender to more. And ac-
 cordingly, universal depravation and corruption
 seized and possessed them, and the whole series
 of their discourses and actions showed that they
 were full of all manner of injustice, lewdness,
 mischief, covetousness, and malignity; perpet-
 ually injuring each other, and drawing damage
 and misery on themselves; while they were
 filled and intoxicated with every imaginable
 vice, envy, murder, contention, fraud, the in-
 veteracy of all evil and pernicious habits,^r which
 no sense of decency or regard to reputation or

30 interest could reform. Instead of entertaining
 those friendly regards to each other which com-
 mon humanity might have taught them, they
 were whispering something against those that
 were present, as well as backbiting such as were
 absent; and being haters of God, discontented
 with his government, and disaffected to his
 rule as a righteous and holy Being who
 could not but be highly displeased with
 their abominations, they were violent and
 overbearing^s in their behaviour to each other,

the natural use of
 the women, burned
 in their lust one to-
 ward another, men
 with men working
 that which is un-
 seemly, and receiv-
 ing in themselves
 that recompense of
 their error which
 was meet.

28 And even as
 they did not like to
 retain God in their
 knowledge, God gave
 them over to a re-
 probate mind, to do
 those things which
 are not convenient:

29 Being filled with
 all unrighteousness,
 fornication, wicked-
 ness, covetousness,
 maliciousness; full
 of envy, murder, de-
 bate, deceit, malig-
 nity; whisperers,

30 Backbiters, ha-
 ters of God, despite-

^p Were not solicitous.] Εδοκιμασαν im-
 ports a concern to bring things to a trial or
 touchstone, which this translation ex-
 presses much better than ours, which
 coldly renders it, they liked not.

^q Things most inexpedient.] The origi-
 nal expression is a meiosis to express
 things most detestable; as αεινεια εργα
 signifies all the inhumanities which Achilles
 most ungenerously practised on the
 corpse of Hector. Compare Wisd. xiv.
 22—27. See Bos, in loc.

^r Mischief, malignity, inveteracy.] Ac-
 cording to some acute commentators,
 πονηρια signifies doing mischief, κακια a
 malicious temper, and νωνονθια a custom of
 repeating it frequently.

^s Violent and overbearing.] Υβριστης is
 properly opposed to σωφρων, and ex-
 presses the character of a man who is re-
 solved to gratify his own appetites and
 passions, and to pursue what he apprehends
 his own interest, right or wrong,
 without at all regarding those inconve-

ful, proud, boasters,
inventors of evil
things, disobedient
to parents,

*proud of what they had, and arrogant boast-
ers of what they had not; ingenious inventors
of evil and vicious things, who piqued them-
selves on making some new discoveries in the
arts of sensuality or mischief. And it is no
wonder that when there was such an impious dis-
position to rebel against God, they should also*

SECT.
III.
Rom.
i. 30.

31 Without under-
standing, covenant-
breakers, without nat-
ural affection, im-
placable, unmerci-
ful:

*be disobedient to earthly parents, And that*³¹
*they should act in so wild and unaccountable a
manner as to seem to be without the natural
understanding of men; implacable in their re-
sentments, without natural affection,^t even to
their own children in some instances, and to
their parents in others. And when a reconcili-
ation was attempted, and mutual engagements
entered into with the highest solemnity, they
were, on any present appearance of advantage,
presently for breaking those pacific treaties, and
unmerciful in pursuing their schemes of cruelty
and revenge, whenever they got any new oppor-*

32 Who knowing
the judgment of God,
(that they which

*tunity of doing it. This was the character*³²
*which generally prevailed in the heathen world,
who, though they knew the righteous judgment of
God,^u and though their consciences, as well as
the lessons of their wisest teachers, told them*

niences or sufferings which he may there-
by bring upon others.

^t *Without natural affection.*] Ἀσπογν
may include the absence of both parental
and filial affection. The custom of ex-
posing new-born infants which prevailed
so generally in the heathen world, and
that among polite nations, and persons
in other respects not destitute of human-
ity, is a most striking instance of the
truth of this assertion, as that of killing
their aged parents also was of the coun-
terpart.

^u *Who, though they knew the righteous
judgment of God, &c.*] The Clermont
copy inserts the words οὐκ ἐννοήσαν after
ἐπιγινώσκεις; agreeable to which reading,
Mr. Locke renders it, who, though they
acknowledge the rule of right [δικαιοσύνη]
prescribed them by God, and discovered
by the light of nature, yet did not under-
stand that they who do these things are
worthy of death, and therefore, συνευδο-
κῶσι, live well with those who do them,
“that is, converse with them without
“any marks of disesteem and censure;

“whereas the Jew, who condemns the
“evils which he practises, is much more
“inexcusable:” so connecting this verse
with the 2d chapter. But I neither think
the authority of the Clermont copy by
any means sufficient to justify our ad-
mitting this reading, nor can imagine it
would make good sense; for surely if
they knew a rule of right prescribed by
God, they could not be ignorant that the
violation of it would expose them to
punishment; and it is evident, in fact,
from numberless passages in heathen
moralists, that they were not ignorant
of it. The vulgar Latin does indeed par-
tly follow this peculiar reading; but they
add, *non solum qui faciunt, sed qui consen-
tiunt facientibus*, “not only they who com-
mit these crimes, but they who agree
“with others that commit them;” which
I think makes a sense much preferable
to Mr. Locke’s, though by no means
agreeable to the original.—It seems here
to be implied, that to look with compla-
cency on the vices of others is one of the
last degrees of degeneracy.

SECT. *that they who do such things as these are worthy* commit such things
 III. *of death, yet not only do these things themselves,* are worthy of death,)
 Rom. *but also look with complacency upon and agree* not only do the same,
 i. 32. *together with those that do them; forming confederacies to countenance and support each other,* but have pleasure in
and impudently out-braving those who should
presume to bear testimony against them.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 21. WHEN we dwell on the representation of that character which this humane and candid apostle gives us of the heathen world with regard to their idolatries, impieties, and other immoralities, what reason have we to bless God for the dispensation of the gospel, which hath wrought so effectually for the reformation of thousands who might otherwise have been as deeply drenched in all these enormities as the vilest of them! For we know that it was not the barbarous nations alone, but some of the politest, who, in neglect of all the opportunities they had of knowing better, and in opposition to that better knowledge which some of them actually obtained, were often distinguished for the superstition of their worship and the scandal of their lives; so that the chief illustrations of this sad subject are to be borrowed from Egypt, Greece, and Rome.

Let us learn not only to guard against the vices for which the heathens are here branded, (knowing that the practice in us will be yet more criminal,) but let us cultivate the opposite virtues of justice and temperance, benevolence and contentment, peace 29—31 and charity, sincerity and humility; and let us cherish the natural tender affections. If offences arise, let us always be ready to hearken to the terms of reconciliation, and faithfully observe 32 our engagements; taking the greatest heed that, knowing so clearly as we do the judgments of God, we do not, by any means, give countenance to, and seem to join in a confederacy with sinners.

Let us bless God for all the capacities and opportunities he hath given to the heathen nations of coming to the knowledge of himself by the things that are made, which declare his eternal 19, 20 power and godhead, and render inexcusable both atheists and idolaters among them. But when we recollect how many either entirely lost the truth or imprisoned it in unrighteousness, let us be most affectionately thankful for so superior a light, for that gospel which is to every believer, without exception, the power 16 of God for salvation, and which declareth the righteousness of God as the object of our faith. May we properly receive it, 18 and so escape the terrors of that divine wrath which is revealed from heaven against all impiety and unrighteousness of men!

To this revelation let us give the most attentive heed, and be much upon our guard against those vain and sophistical reasonings to which they who knowing God, neglect to glorify him as God, are so ready to fly; lest we approve ourselves fools in proportion to the degree in which we profess to be wise, and provoke God to give us up to an injudicious mind, and to leave us to that reciprocal influence which evil principles and evil actions have to render each other more inveterate and incurable.

SECT.
III.
Ver. 21.

SECT. IV.

The apostle discourses more particularly of those who knew their duty and yet acted contrary to it, and of the condemnation they must expect from God; that so he might properly introduce the particular charge he had to advance against the Jews, as, above all others, answering that character. Rom. ii. 1--16.

ROMANS II. 1.
THEREFORE thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

ROMANS II. 1.
I HAVE just been speaking of the great and aggravated guilt of those who not only do things which they know to be displeasing to God and evil in themselves, but also agree together to countenance those that do them. And it may be, some who know they are not of that number,^a but, on one principle or another, bear their testimony against the prevailing immoralities of those about them, may imagine themselves secure and happy. I must therefore argue, from the premises just laid down, that *thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest and pretendest to pass sentence upon others; for I know what the character of such generally is, and I know that the very best of them all have their blemishes and faults; and therefore I may say, that wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself; for thou who judgest doest the same things* in many instances,^b

SECT.
IV.
Rom.
ii. 1.

^a Some who know they are not of that number.] There is a greater delicacy in the apostle's transition here than most commentators have imagined. From what he had before said to prove the most abandoned and ignorant of the heathens inexcusable in their wickedness, he justly infers that the crimes of those who had such knowledge of the truth as to condemn the vices of others, were proportionably yet more inexcusable.

This was eminently the case with the Jews: but he does not directly speak of them till the 9th verse, but draws the inference at first in such general terms as might also comprehend Gentile philosophers, and all others who contradicted the moral instructions which they themselves gave.

^b *Doest the same things.*] Dr. Whitby shows by many very proper quotations, chiefly from Josephus, that the Jews of

SECT. and consequently art convicted out of thine own

IV. mouth. *For we know in general, that the judgment of God is according to truth and justice*

Rom.
ii. 2.

against all those who do such things, however they may behave towards their fellow-sinners.

3 *And canst thou then, by the sentence which thou passest upon others, think to evade that which goest forth against thyself? Or reasonest thou thus, O man, whosoever thou art, whether Pagan philosopher or Jewish teacher, who judgest those that do such things, while thou doest them thyself, that thou shouldst escape the judgment*

4 *of God? Or is thy heart so obdurate as to make light of those judgments which thou must certainly meet, because they are not immediately executed? and dost thou indeed despise the riches of his gentleness, and forbearance, and long-suffering,^c exercised towards thee for such a length of time, so as to think it may be safely trifled with? Surely if thou dost thou art shamefully ignorant indeed, as not knowing that the goodness and gentleness of God leadeth thee to repentance: He bears with thee, that thou mayest prevent the threatened blow by humbling thyself before him and forsaking thy sins. But*

5 *this day of mercy and grace has its limits; and however thou mayest flatter thyself now, the consequence will soon appear fatal, and thou wilt find, to thine unutterable confusion, that by this hardness and impenitence of thy heart thou art treasuring up to thyself a more abundant store of wrath in the day of final wrath, and of that revelation of the righteous judgment of God which is now, as it were, under a veil, and so disregarded because unseen; but it shall then be set*

6 *forth to view in all its lustre and terror. The Divine Being is indeed a most gracious and indulgent father; but be it known unto thee, that he is also the wise and holy Governor of the*

2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things.

3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

6 Who will render

that age were guilty of many of those crimes which had been enumerated above. See Joseph. de Bello Judaic. lib. v. cap. 13, [al. 16,] § 6, and lib. vii. cap. 8, [al. 16,] sect. 1. Edit. Havercamp.

^c *Gentleness, forbearance, and long-suffering.* Mr. Blackwall (Sacr. Class. Vol. 1. p. 306.) enlarges on the great emphasis of these words in the original. He thinks *χρηστείας* signifies benevolence and generosity

in the general, *αφοχνη* mercy in the proposals of pardon and happiness to fallen creatures, and *μακροθυμία* patience in attending so long on such obstinate wretches. I have given what I take to be the exactest rendering of each; but did not judge it convenient to protract the paraphrase of so lively a passage, by attempting in many words to illustrate it.

to every man according to his deeds:

7 To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; eternal life:

8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath;

9 Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first,

universe, who will recompense every man according to his works in the final distribution of good and evil, how unequal soever his present dispensations may seem. To those generous and elevated souls that are not discouraged by present difficulties, nor ensnared by the allurements of the world, but amidst them all, by a patient and persevering course of well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, he will graciously render the great prize they pursue, even eternal life: But to the perverse and ungrateful children of contention,^d who quarrel with the merciful dispensation that should have saved them, and are obstinately disobedient to the dictates of truth, but servilely obedient to the usurped and base tyranny of unrighteousness, perversely opposing the evidence of true religion because they are averse to its practical design, [he will render] a quite different portion: For them is reserved all that can be imagined most dreadful; indignation shall be conceived, and wrath shall break forth against them; The sharpest tribulation, the most hopeless and inextricable anguish and despair,^e which shall be poured out in a torrent of unmingled misery, even upon every soul of man who worketh that which is evil. This shall be rendered to the Jew in the first place,^f who, far

SECT.
IV.

Rom.
ii. 7.

^d Children of contention.] Mr. Locke thinks that patience in the former verse, and contention here, refer to the malignant enmity with which the Jews endeavoured to exclude the Gentiles from the church. Compare Gal. i. 7; 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5; but it seems much better to explain it in a latitude which shall indeed include this as one instance of obstinacy and perverseness, without contracting that extensive and important sense which our interpretation gives. And that the contention of the Gentiles is included here, evidently appears by the conclusion of the sentence.

^e Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, &c.] Here seems to be a reference to those expressive words, Psal. lxxviii. 49, where, speaking of the Egyptians, it is said, he cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble. And it may finely intimate, that the Jews would in the day of vengeance be more severely punish-

ed than even their Egyptian enemies were when God made their plague so wonderful. στενοχωρία properly signifies straitness; and is used by Xenophon to signify a narrow way that cannot be passed. See Raphel. Not. ex Xen. in loc. As for the difference between θυμὸς and ὀργή, Elsner (Observ. Vol. I. p. 14.) takes some pains to show that the former signifies the first conception of anger, and the latter a desire and purpose of punishing. Some reference to this interpretation will be found in the paraphrase, though expressed as briefly as possible.

^f To the Jew first.] Here we have the first express mention of Jews in this section; and it is introduced with great energy and weight. Their being trained up in the knowledge of the true religion, and having Christ and his apostles first sent to them, will place them in the foremost rank of the criminals who obey not the truth.

SECT. from escaping by his superior advantages and land also of the Gen-
IV. privileges, will, by the abuse of them, be ob- tile;

noxious to distinguished wrath. Nor shall the
Rom. Greek escape, who shall be judged according
ii. 9. to the light he hath enjoyed, or the opportunity

10 he had of enjoying more. *But*, as I said before, and repeat it with pleasure, as the more delightful part of the subject, which I love to dwell upon; *glory, honour, and peace* [shall be] recompensed to every one who worketh good; first to the Jew, who stands fairer (in virtue of the divine revelation he enjoys) for distinguished degrees of it, as well as receives the first messages of this salvation; and then to the Greek, who, if he exclude not himself, shall not be ex-

11 emptied from his proper share: *For there is no partial acceptance of persons with God,*^g which should engage him, on account of outward condition or lineal descent, to spare obstinacy and wickedness in a Jew, or to reject the humble

12 faith and obedience of a Gentile. And he will fully display this impartiality of administration in the great day of universal judgment; *for as many as have sinned without the Mosaic law,*^h and have continued impenitent in their crimes, shall without the law perish; the light of nature, without the knowledge of revelation, being sufficient to condemn them. *And as many as have sinned under the instruction and obligation of the law shall, with proportionable severity, be judged by the law,*ⁱ and meet with a more awful sentence, as their offences have been aggravated by such express discoveries of the divine will:

10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile;

11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

12 For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law.

^g *Acceptance of persons.*] That is, in passing the final sentence he is determined by their real characters.—This is very consistent with an equality in distributing advantages and opportunities of improvement, according to the sovereign pleasure of the great Lord of all. This assertion of the apostle's, so often repeated, will appear the more important and seasonable, as the Jews thought that no Israelite should be deprived of future happiness, whatever his faults had been, unless he were guilty of apostasy, idolatry, and a few other very enormous crimes. See Mr. Jortin's Discourses concerning the Truth of the Christian

Religion, p. 26, 27, and the notes there.

^h *Sinned without the Mosaic law, &c.*] It is evident that must here be intended; for none can sin without the natural law, under which all are born.

ⁱ *Perish—be judged.*] These two phrases are so different, that one would hardly think they were intended to signify the same ideas; yet so many arguments, both from reason and revelation, lie against supposing wicked heathens annihilated, as Mr. Locke seems to insinuate from these words, that I think it most rational to interpret both these expressions as signifying real punishment, but in different degrees.

13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

For not the men who are merely respectful hearers of the law of God in the synagogues, or loud and vehement applauders or defenders of it elsewhere, [are] just before God, nor will he ever accept any encomiums upon it instead of the obedience it demands; but the doers of the law, who steadily and universally, in the tenour of their lives, act agreeably to its precepts, they, and they only, shall be justified in the day of final audit and account, whether their knowledge of it were more or less express. For 14

SECT.
IV.
Rom.
ii. 13.

14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

when the Gentiles, who have not the written revelation of the Divine law, do, by an instinct of nature, and in consequence of the untaught dictates of their own mind, the moral duties required by the precepts of the law,^k these having not the benefit of an express and revealed law, are nevertheless a law unto themselves; the voice of nature is their rule, and they are inwardly taught, by the constitution of their own minds, to revere it as the law of that God by

15 Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another:)

whom it was formed. And they who are in this state do evidently show the work of the law, in its most important moral precepts, written upon their hearts by the same divine hand that engraved the decalogue upon the tables given to Moses; their consciences joining to bear witness to it, and [their] mutual reasonings among themselves accusing those that break such precepts or defending those who observe them, attest the same thing. As therefore there are 16

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

sure traces of some natural knowledge of the law, a due regard will be maintained towards them, and on this most equitable principle will the grand process be conducted, in that awful day when God shall judge the secrets of the hearts of men by Jesus Christ, according to the tenour of that glorious dispensation which I may call my gospel,^l as it is committed to my care;

^k *By nature.*] Raphelius (Not. ex Xen. in loc.) shows that animals are said to do that by nature which they do by instinct; and Elsner, (Observ. Vol. II. p. 16.) that τα τε νομῶν signifies the duties inculcated by the law.

^l *According to my gospel.*] Nothing is more contrary to the apostle's meaning, as expressly declared above, than that all men are to be judged by the gospel. He

only means that the gospel teaches such a judgment. Therefore some, transposing the last clause, render it very plainly and properly, *In the day when God shall, according to my gospel, judge the secrets of men.* Mr. Mace transposes the whole sixteenth verse to join it with the twelfth; and I think it very evident the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth verses come in as a parenthesis; but the trans-

SECT. in which no doctrine is more important or evident than that of a universal and most impartial judgment.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us revere the righteous judgment of God, which is here laid before us in so particular and affecting a manner; remembering we are each of us to have our part in that day of final retribution, and that the secrets of our hearts will then be made manifest. Let us often reflect upon the awful result; and consider that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, will be our portion, if we are contentious and disobedient to the truth, yea, if we do not, by a patient continuance in well-doing, seek the promised glory, honour, and immortality; which if we do, we shall, through the grace of God, secure everlasting life. Vain will our knowledge and our profession otherwise be, and our testimony against the sins of others will only inflame the guilt of our own.

Let it ever be remembered that the goodness of God, which we have such daily reason to acknowledge and adore, gently takes us, as it were, by the hand, and leadeth to repentance; and while we continually live upon it, let us not act in contempt of it, or abuse it to our own inconceivable detriment. Is the wrath already laid up so small that we should be increasing the treasure? increasing the terrors of the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God?

It will be a most impartial as well as important day. Nor are we concerned to know how the heathen will fare in it; let it suffice us, that if they are condemned, they will be righteously condemned; not for remaining ignorant of the gospel they never had an opportunity of hearing, but for violating those precepts of the Divine law which were inscribed on their consciences. Let us bless God that he has written it there, and reverence the traces of his hand on our own minds; always remembering that the discoveries of revelation were never intended to erase or discredit the dictates of nature, but to illustrate and confirm them.

We shall be judged by the dispensation we have enjoyed; and, how devoutly soever we may hear and speak of it, shall be condemned, if we have not acted agreeably thereto. The Lord grant that we may all find that mercy of the Lord which we shall every one of us need in that day; and that we may find it, may we keep that day continually in view, and direct all our actions with a regard to its grand decisions!

position of verses seems a dangerous thing; though I think, in some evident cases, that of a few words may be pardoned, considering the different genius of ancient and modern, eastern and western languages.

SECT. V.

Paul proceeds to fix the charge upon the Jews, that they were sinners as well as the Gentiles, and consequently stood in need of justification by the grace of the gospel as well as they. Rom. ii. 17; to the end.

ROMANS II. 17.

BEHOLD, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God;

ROMANS II. 17.

I HAVE hitherto been speaking of the inexcusable guilt of those who have the greatest opportunity of knowing their duty, and in consequence of this acknowledge it, and condemn others for acting contrary to it, while yet they are guilty of the same evils. I will now keep on the reserve no longer; but will boldly declare, that in what I have said concerning such, I meant the conviction not merely of heathen philosophers, but of wicked Jews; and if thou, O reader, art such an one, I apply myself personally to thee. Behold, thou bearest the name of a Jew,^a and thou reposest thyself on the knowledge and profession of the law, as if that would save thee; and thou gloriest in the true God, in whom thou believest; as if thy descent and profession, by virtue of the peculiar covenant he made with thy fathers, must necessarily entitle thee to his favour. Thou boastest of it as thine honour¹⁸ and happiness that thou knowest [his] will, not merely by uncertain conjecture and reasoning, but by an express revelation, and that thou accurately discernest and distinguishest upon things that differ,^b which untaught nature may in many respects confound; being thyself well instructed out of the law, having been from thy infancy catechised and educated in the accurate knowledge

SECT. V.

Rom. ii. 17.

¹⁸ And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law:

^a *Bearest the name of a Jew.*] The apostle frequently addresses himself to unconverted Jews in this epistle, and especially here; for no doubt there weremany of them at Rome, who might be curious to know what he, who had been so violent an enemy to Christianity, would say to recommend it. And Paul's great love to them engaged him, on the contingency of such an event, to insert such passages;

and other passages are calculated for the conviction of other unbelievers, as well as for the edification of Christians.

^b *Discernest things that differ.*] So Beza renders *δοκιμαζεις τα διαφεροντα*; and Elsner vindicates it in a manner which seems very satisfactory; though Capellus, Hammond, and Erasmus, defend our translation, *approvest things that are more excellent*. See Elsner, *Observ.* Vol. II. p. 17.

SECT. of it. And in consequence of this, thou art
 v. very confident that thou thyself art fit to teach
 the whole Gentile world; to be a guide of the
 Rom. blind, as thou thinkest them to be; a light to
 ii. 19. them that, for want of the light thou dispersest,

19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness;

20 are in darkness: An instructor of the ignorant, a teacher of these babes,^c as thou esteemest them in comparison with thyself; having perhaps not only the sacred oracles in thine hands, but also, in order to render thee more expert and methodical in the use of them, a summary, a compendious system and form of the knowledge and truth which is contained in the law.^d

20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

21 Now I deny not that thine advantages are in this respect very great; but I must caution thee that thou art not deceived by any absolute dependence upon them, and must press thee to reflect how far thine own temper and conduct is agreeable to this knowledge and profession. Let me ask therefore, thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Dost thou act as if thou hadst forgotten thine own precepts, or didst
 22 imagine they did not oblige thee? Thou that preachest, for instance, a man should not steal, dost thou think thyself tolerated to steal?^e Thou that forbiddest a man to commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that dost so abominate idols, and speakest of them at all times with such great and just abhorrence, dost thou commit sacrilege by robbing the true God of what he so justly claims from thee, whether of outward tribute or inward homage; while thou so strenuously disputest against any other object of
 23 worship? In one word, thou that gloriest in

21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?

22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?

23 Thou that makest thy boast of the

^c Blind,—ignorant,—babes.] These were titles which the proud Jews often gave to the Gentiles.

^d Form.] *Μορφοσις* has this signification, 2 Tim. iii. 5. And Bos (Exercit. p. 100, 101.) shows that it often signifies the sketch or outlines of a thing; which suits the interpretation here given better than he seems to apprehend.—L'Enfant renders it, having in the law the rule of knowledge and truth; but I know not whether *μορφωσις* ever signifies rule; and if the article has any force, it is in

favour of the rendering we have preferred.

^e Dost thou steal?] Grotius on this text proves from Josephus, that some of the Jewish priests lived by rapine, depriving others of their due share of the tithes, and even suffering them to perish for want; that others were guilty of gross uncleanness; and as for sacrilegiously robbing God and his altar, it had been complained of as early as Malachi's days, Mal. i. 8, 12, 13. So that the instances are given with great propriety and judgment.

law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

the law as so excellent, and thinkest it such an honour to be acquainted with it, dost thou by the transgression of the law dishonour God, and act as if thou wert studying the declaration of his will only to show him in a more presumptuous and contumacious manner that thou dost not regard it? It is not an improbable supposition that I have now been making; for I, who have had an opportunity of knowing by long experience the temper and character of the Jewish people, know it to be such, that I will boldly say to their faces, "*The name of the God of Israel, for which you profess so warm a zeal, is by your means blasphemed among the Gentiles, and his holy religion brought into contempt by your notorious and scandalous immoralities; as it is written in your own scriptures concerning your fathers, whose evil deeds you so generally imitate.*" (Compare 2 Sam. xii. 14; Isa. lii. 5; Ezek. xxxvi. 23.)

SECT.
V.
Rom.
ii. 23.

25 For circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

My duty absolutely requires me to give such cautions and to make such remonstrances as these; *for circumcision is indeed profitable if a man keep the law;*^f his being a Jew, if he be truly a good man, will give him many advantages for becoming a Christian, and, were his obedience perfect, would entitle him to the blessings promised in the law. *But if thou be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is in effect become uncircumcision;* thou wilt have no more benefit by it than thou hadst never received it; as thou well knowest that, according to the tenour of the law itself, circumcision, far from being any excuse for thy offence, will rather expose thee in many respects to a much greater punishment. *And therefore, by a parity of reason, if the uncircumcision, that is, an uncircumcised person, observe and obey the greatest and most important precepts or righteous determinations of the law, though without any ac-*

26 Therefore, if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall

^f For circumcision, &c.] It is most evident that *γὰρ* cannot here signify that the following words are a reason for what was asserted in those immediately preceding; it seems little more than expletive, as the particle *now* among us often is. I shall not therefore in many passages

take the pains of endeavouring to find such a connection as would justify the use of it in its strictest propriety; in attempting which, many have vainly perplexed themselves to no other purpose than to make the writings of St. Paul appear more obscure than they really are.

SECT. v. acquaintance with the book that contains them; not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

Rom.
ii. 26.

requires, *shall not his uncircumcision be imputed or reckoned as circumcision?* Shall he not be treated as favourably by God in his final account as if he had been circumcised, when his not being so does not proceed from any contempt of the Divine authority, but from his knowing nothing of the rite, or not apprehending it in his particular circumstances to be his duty to

27 practise it? *Yea, it is certain that the uncircumcision that is by nature, a man who continues uncircumcised as he was born, accomplishing the great moral purposes of the law, in subserviency to which its rituals were appointed, shall judge and condemn thee; who, while thou actest by the letter of its ceremonial precepts, and retainest circumcision and all its appendages with the greatest exactness, art nevertheless, in things far more essential and important, a transgressor of the law, to the spiritual meaning and extent of which thou continuest an utter stranger, and which thou encouragest thyself, by these external observances, to neglect.*

28 *For upon the whole, as you would not allow any man to be truly a Jew merely for any outward rites which he might observe, if he continued uncircumcised, how carefully soever he might conceal it; so must I freely declare to you, that he is not in the most sublime and important sense a Jew, that is, one of God's covenant and beloved people, who is merely so in outward show; neither indeed [is that] the true circumcision which is*

29 *apparent in the flesh: Nothing merely ritual or ceremonial can recommend a man to the Divine favour; but he [is] a Jew, that is, one of God's chosen people, who is one in the hidden part, as David expresses it, (Psal. li. 6.) or in the secret recesses of the soul; and the acceptable circumcision [is that] of the heart, which your own prophets so often inculcate, (see Deut. x. 16; xxx. 6; Jer. iv. 4.) when they urge the putting away all inward impurity and obstinacy, as that which is most highly offensive in the sight of God. This excellent circumcision is seated in the spirit, consisting of a change made there by*

27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

28 For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh:

29 But he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not

in the letter; whose
praise is not of men,
but of God.

the operation of the Divine Spirit himself, and not merely in an external conformity to the letter of the law, of which the worst of men may be capable. Now such a person, whatever his outward profession may be, is one whose praise [is] not so much of men,^s who, eager to spread their own sects, applaud those who become their proselytes, or most strenuously retain their peculiar forms; but is of God, who alone knows the heart, and whose esteem and complacency is infinitely preferable to that of whole nations or worlds.

SECT.

V.

Rom.
ii. 29.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET our hearts be always attentive to those lessons of inward religion which the sacred oracles fail not continually to inculcate. It is the praise of God that is in question; and who can be so lost to all true greatness of mind, to all generous ambition, as that he should not long and even burn to obtain it? Or who can enjoy or attend to the praise of men, while he has any reason to fear that God condemns? Ver. 28. 29

To have the name of a Jew or of a Christian, how little will it signify! To boast in an external and temporary relation to God, if we are such as shall finally be disowned by him, will make us the more wretched. To have known his will, to have distinguished things that differ, and set up for instructors or reprovers of others, will only furnish out matter of condemnation from our own mouths, if, while teaching others, we teach not ourselves. Well may the punishment be aggravated where the guilt is so great; when it brings so peculiar a reproach upon religion, and in effect dictates so many blasphemies against the name of God, at the very time it pretends to exalt it. 17 18 19, 21 24

We pity the Gentiles, and we have reason to do it; for they are lamentably blind and dissolute: but let us take heed lest those appearances of virtue which are to be found among some of them condemn us, who, with the letter of the law and the gospel, and with the solemn tokens of a covenant-relation to God, transgress his precepts, and violate our engagements to him; so turning the means of goodness and happiness into the occasion of more aggravated guilt and misery. 26, 27

^s Praise is not of men, &c.] Perhaps the name of Judah, which signifies here is a reference to the etymology *praise*. Compare Gen. xxix. 35. and of the word Jew, it being derived from xlix. 8.

S E C T. VI.

After removing some objections, the sad case both of Jews and Gentiles is farther illustrated, and the representation shown to be agreeable to the scriptures of the Old Testament. Rom. iii. 1—19.

ROMANS III. 1.

SECT.
VI.Rom.
iii. 1.

BUT some may be ready to object, “If it be
“so that no circumcision but that of the
“heart will avail to men’s final happiness, *what*
“*then [is] the advantage of the Jew, or what the*
“*profit of circumcision, which yet you seemed*
“*to allow when you said but just before,*
“*(chap. ii. 25,) that it in some circumstances*
2 “*profiteth?*” Nor do I deny it now: I say that
it profiteth *much every way*, or in a variety of
respects; as I shall hereafter more fully show,
(compare chap. ix. 4, 5,) and *chiefly in that*
they who have received it have been intrusted
with the oracles of God^a in the divinely-inspired
scriptures, by which they are taught many im-
portant lessons, which may direct their lives and
dispose them to embrace the gospel, to the se-
curity of their final and everlasting salvation.
3 Of great importance indeed are these divine
oracles to this purpose. *And what if some, and*
they a considerable number, of those who once
possessed these invaluable treasures, believed
them not, or did not duly consider what they
speculatively believed, and so rejected the gospel
to which they were intended to lead, shall their
unbelief disannul and enervate the faith of God?^b
Shall it destroy his fidelity to his promises, or
prevent our receiving them and owning their
4 accomplishment with becoming regard? *God*
forbid that we should insinuate any thing of this
kind. No: *let the blessed God ever be acknow-*
ledged to be true and faithful, though every man

ROMANS III. 1.

WHAT advantage
then hath the
Jew? or what profit
is there of circumci-
sion?

2 Much every way:
chiefly because that
unto them were com-
mitted the oracles of
God.

3 For what if some
did not believe? shall
their unbelief make
the faith of God
without effect?

4 God forbid: yea,
let God be true, but
every man a liar; as

^a *The oracles of God.]* This is so remarkable and important a testimony to the Divine inspiration of the Old Testament in general, that it can leave no doubt concerning the full persuasion of St. Paul upon this head.

^b *The faith of God.]* This is an ambiguous expression, and may either sig-

nify the fidelity of God, or that faith of ours which God has pointed out as the way of obtaining justification and life. The senses run at last into each other. I have included both; and hinted, in the last words of the paraphrase, at a sort of intermediate sense; as the attentive reader will observe.

it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

be esteemed a liar and unfit to have any confidence reposed in him; as it is written, (Psal. li. 4.) "*That thou mightest be justified in thy words, and mightest upon the whole overcome when thou art called into judgment;*" that they who insolently dare to arraign the equity of thy conduct may soon meet with the confusion they deserve."

SECT. VI.
Rom. iii. 4.

3 But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man.)

But a Jew may be ready farther to object and say, "*If our unrighteousness recommend the righteousness of God,*"^a and illustrate his perfections in that way of becoming righteous by faith which he now ordains, *what shall we say, and what are we to expect? Is not God unrighteous, who inflicteth that wrath which it is well known you assert he will execute upon the whole Jewish nation for rejecting it?*" I now speak as a man who had a mind to cavil at the gospel might plead, and by no means express my own sentiments, as you may well imagine.

6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?

No: God forbid that I should harbour such a thought or allow such a consequence: *For how then should God judge the world?* With Abraham our father, I acknowledge him under the character of the Judge of all the earth, and maintain that he will always "do right," Gen. xviii. 5. And as for such a caviller, he might as well speak out and say, "*If the truth of God hath abounded to his own glory by means of my lie,*"^e my falsehood and iniquity of any kind; if he has taken occasion to over-rule my offence to the accomplishment of his word and the honour of his administration; *why am I nevertheless called into judgment as a sinner, and arraigned for that as a crime which is attended with such happy conse-*

7 For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?

^e *When thou art called into judgment.]* Elsner and Bos have abundantly shown that *αἰτιωσις* has this signification, (compare Acts xxv. 25; xxvi. 6.) and that *νικᾶν*, in such a connection, signifies to carry the cause. See Elsner, Observ. Vol. II. p. 18, 19; and Bos in loc.

^d *The righteousness of God.]* Though the phrase be in itself ambiguous, I think Dr. Whitby has abundantly proved it has here the sense we give it.

^e *If the truth of God, &c.]* The Prussian

Testament renders this clause, "In the mean time, if my lie conduces to the glory of God by making the grandeur of this truth shine forth with superior advantage," &c. This is the clear and genuine sense, but it is not consistent with the rule I generally follow, to deviate so far from the words of the original; and I mention it as a specimen of many liberties in which I have declined following that version, after attentive examination of it.

SECT. "quences?" [*And why may I not say,*] (as we 8 And not rather,
VI. *are calumniated, and some most injuriously af-* (as we be slanderous-
firm that we maintain,) "*Let us do evil things* ly reported, and as
Rom. "*that good consequences may come from* some affirm that we
iii. 8. "*them?*" You may easily see that principles say,) Let us do evil
like these would justify the greatest crimes in that good may come?
the world, if they might be so over-ruled as whose damnation is
to prove the occasion of good; and conse- just.

sequently, would so entirely confound the nature of good and evil, that I think it not worth while to argue with such persons, *whose condemnation is* indeed so apparently just,^f that I leave them to be convinced and silenced by their own consciences, and only mention such a detestable principle solemnly to warn you against it.

9 But to return from this long digression—If the question I mentioned before be repeated, and any say, "*What then upon the whole? have we Jews the advantage of the Gentiles so far, that in consequence of having these oracles of God which we have received, the promises which he will never fail to observe, and the principles of righteousness which he will never himself violate in his conduct, we can claim justification before God by virtue of our obedience to his law?*" *Not at all; for we have before proved that Jews and Gentiles are all under sin,* and have placed them as convicted criminals at the divine bar; *As it is written,*^g (Psal. xiv. 1.) in a variety of passages which may be applied to the present occasion,

9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

10 As it is written,

^f *Whose condemnation is just.*] I think this must imply that there are certain rules which God has laid down for us, disobedience to which in any imaginable circumstances is universally a moral evil; even though the quantity of good arising from thence to our fellow-creatures should be greater than that arising from observing those rules. For if this be not allowed, there can be no shadow of force in the apostle's conclusion.

^g *As it is written.*] These scriptures are collected from different parts of the Old Testament; but there are many editions of the Seventy in which they all stand together, in the xivth, or, according to their order, xliiith Psalm; which has given some occasion to think that other alterations may have been

made in that Greek version, to render it more agreeable to the New Testament; though many passages might escape the notice of such as made this attempt, if it were really made. But it must have been, as we see in this instance it was, a fruitless one; considering how wide such copies were dispersed, and how different the religious sentiments of the persons with whom they were lodged. It seems much more reasonable to account for the diversity we find between the original and quotations, by supposing the sense rather than words intentionally regarded; and some accidental alterations have happened since in the Hebrew copies, which, in several places, may make the difference greater than it originally was.

There is none righteous, no not one:	“ <i>There is none righteous, no not one: There</i>	SECT.
11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God:	“ <i>is none that understandeth his duty and his true interest; there is none that seeketh after God,^b and constantly endeavoureth to secure</i>	VI. Rom. iii. 11.
12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one:	“ <i>his favour: They are all declined from that moral rectitude which is the glory of the rational nature; they are altogether become useless as to the great end for which they were made, so that there is none that practiseth good, there is not so much as one: (Psal. xiv. 1—3; liii. 1—3.) Their throat [is] noisome</i>	12
13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:	“ <i>and dangerous as an open sepulchre, gaping to swallow them up or poison them with its infected air; with their tongues they have used the most mischievous deceit; and while they make the fairest profession of friendship, the mortal venom of asps [is] hid under their lips, which utter the most infectious and fatal slanders. (Psal. cxl. 3.) They are men</i>	13
14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:	“ <i>whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; (Psal. x. 7.) so that the most shocking profaneness mingles itself with that malignity of heart towards their fellow-men which</i>	14
15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:	“ <i>breathes in every word. Their feet [are] swift to run towards the places where they have appointed to shed the blood of the innocent. (Prov. i. 16, 18.) Ruin and misery</i>	15
16 Destruction and misery are in their ways;	“ <i>[are,] on the whole, in all their ways; they bring it upon others, and so, by an inevitable consequence, upon themselves at last.</i>	16
17 And the way of peace have they not known:	“ <i>And as for the way of peace and happiness, they have not known or regarded it. (Isa. lix. 7, 8.) And to sum up all in one word, the</i>	17
18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.	“ <i>great cause of all this degeneracy is, that the fear of God is not before their eyes, but they are utterly destitute of any true principle of religion, of any reverence and love to the great and adorable Object of it.” (Psal. xxxvi. 1.)</i>	18

^b *There is none that seeketh after God, &c.]* It is allowed that this passage only proves directly what was the character of the Jews in David's time; but it plainly shows that the wrath of God was awakened against them as well as others for their sins: it proves also that a general degeneracy might prevail among them, though by profession God's people; and it suggests a strong presump-

tion, that if Israel in David's time, which was one of its best ages, was so bad, Gentile nations were still worse; and in all these views it was much to the apostle's purpose to produce the passage. The like observation is in a great measure applicable to all the following quotations; as the paraphrase on ver. 19 suggests, or rather as the apostle himself there evidently insinuates.

SECT.

VI.

Rom.
iii. 19.

This, my brethren, is in general the sad character of mankind in their fallen state; and the representation is the more striking as it is borrowed from the sacred writings. *Now we know that what the law saith* in such passages as these, *it saith to those that were under the law*; ⁱ they do not immediately relate to the heathen, but contain the character of those that were at that time the professing people of God. And as most of these passages are borrowed from the writings of David, Solomon, or Isaiah, it appears that, even in the best days of their state, they had a great deal of enormous wickedness among them. And if Israel, even at such a time, could not justify itself, much less can it be imagined that the idolatrous nations of the Gentiles should be able to do it; *so that every mouth must be stopped, and the whole world stand convicted before God* ^k as guilty, and acknowledge itself obnoxious to a dreadful sentence from his tribunal. Now I earnestly desire to bring every reader under a sense of this, as what is of the highest importance in order to receiving the gospel with becoming gratitude and joy.

19 Now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

IMPROVEMENT.

Who can read this melancholy picture of human nature, copied by the hand of an apostle from the lines first drawn by inspired prophets, without deep humility and lamentation? To
 Ver. 10, 11 this was it sunk, that there was none righteous, no not one;
 18 none disposed to seek after God or to cultivate his fear. And from this bitter fruit, the apostasy of our nature from God,
 13, 14 what detestable fruit proceeds! The throat which is like an open sepulchre, the deceitful tongue, the envenomed lips, the malicious heart, the murderous hand! And who can wonder that such rebels to their heavenly Father should sometimes prove ruffians to their brethren?

Let us bless God that we have been preserved from falling into such enormities, and from falling by them. His grace has restrained us from sinning against him in such an aggravated manner; his providence has guarded us from those whose feet are

ⁱ *What the law saith.*] It appears here that this word *law* doth sometimes signify the Old Testament in general; for not one of the quotations above is taken from the Pentateuch.

^k *Stand convicted before God.*] So ὁμο-δοκῶ τῷ Θεῷ seems exactly to signify. Archbishop Tillotson would render it *liable to divine justice*; which is the same in sense. See his Works, Vol. I. p. 126.

swift to shed blood, and in whose paths there is destruction and misery. SECT. VI.

Let us remember the view in which these instances were brought, even to evince this deplorable but undeniable truth, that Jews and Gentiles are all under sin. The purpose of conviction therefore being answered on our hearts, let us humble ourselves before God as those that stand guilty in his presence and obnoxious to his judgment. Ver. 15, 16, 19

Thankfully let us own the inestimable goodness of God in having favoured us with his sacred oracles, and endeavour to improve in the knowledge of them. Thus instructed, let us be careful to form the most honourable notion of God, as the worthy and universal Judge who will never fail to do right; and may these views of him produce an abhorrence of every thing evil, which must necessarily be displeasing to him! Nor let us ever allow ourselves to be brought under the influence of those fallacious and pernicious maxims which would persuade us that the goodness of the intention sanctifies the badness of the action, or that the pretended benevolence of the end will justify irregularities in the means. God's judgment and decision is final; and an inspired apostle's authority is an answer to a thousand subtleties which might attempt to turn us from the strictest rules of that immutable rectitude on which it always proceeds.

SECT. VII.

From the representation made above of the guilt and misery of mankind, the apostle deduces the necessity of seeking justification by the gospel, and consequently the excellency of that dispensation, as exhibiting the method of it. Rom iii. 20, to the end.

ROMANS III. 20.

THEREFORE by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the SECT. VII.

ROMANS III. 20.

I HAVE just been proposing to you convincing evidences of the universal degeneracy and corruption of mankind, and showing you that the whole world must stand convicted before God: Rom. iii. 20.

therefore let all my readers be persuaded to admit it as a most certain principle, and at all times to act upon it, that according to the just and humble acknowledgment of the Psalmist, (Psal. cxliii. 2.) *no flesh shall be justified, or pronounced righteous, before him,^a by works of*

^a *Be justified, &c.*] The learned Vitræga hath with great propriety observed that this word is borrowed from Psal. cxliii. 2, and must therefore signify to receive the testimony of being righteous from a judge, and cannot merely signify to ob-

SECT. complete obedience to the law of God,^b whether natural or revealed : For instead of justifying any man, it only anticipates, in a more obvious and affecting manner, the sense of his condemnation ; as *by the law is the knowledge of sin*,^c it discovers to us how grievous a thing it is, and exhibits the righteous displeasure of God against it.

law is the knowledge of sin.

Rom.
iii. 20.

21 But yet, blessed be God, every door of hope is not shut against the sinner convicted by the law : for *the righteousness of God*, that is, the manner of becoming righteous which God hath ordained and appointed in his gospel, *without* that perfect obedience which *the law* requires, *is now made manifest ; being indeed attested by the whole tenour of the law and the prophets*,^d which join in leading our eyes to the

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets ;

tain mercy. To be justified also sometimes signifies to overcome in judgment, Psal. li. 4, and the expression of being just before God implies the same. And that this is the sense of the word in this epistle, appears from several passages ; particularly Rom. ii. 3. So that on the whole, as he argues, justification is not a phrase parallel to forgiveness, but refers to a judicial process, and carries in it the idea of acquittal, praise, and reward. And indeed it seems to me always ultimately to refer to the being pronounced and treated as righteous in the great day of God's universal judgment. See Rom. ii. 13, 16.

^b By works of the law.] I think, with Mr. Locke, that the word law must here be taken in this extent, comprehending ceremonial and moral, revealed and natural. And this I conclude, not so much from the omission of the article, (compare Rom. ii. 12, 14, 25, 27 ; chap. iii. 31 ; chap. v. 13, 20 ; in all which places, and many more, νόμος without the article signifies the Mosaic law, as the sense evidently proves,) but from the conclusion which the apostle draws, and the whole tenour of his subsequent argument ; which would have very little weight, if there were room to object, though we cannot be justified by our obedience to the law of Moses, we may be justified by our obedience to God's natural law. And nothing can be more evident than that the premises from which this conclusion is drawn refer to the Gentiles as well as the Jews, and

consequently that law has here, and in many subsequent passages, that general sense.—A very learned person has lately proposed to render ἐξ ἐργων νόμος, by the law of works ; pleading βαπτισμῶν διδασχῆς (Heb. vi. 2,) as a parallel instance ; but I have declined this rendering, as (ver. 27,) the apostle expresses the law of works by words placed in a different order, νόμος τῶν ἐργῶν, opposed to νόμος πίστεως ; and (ver. 28.) χάρις ἐργῶν νόμος is plainly, as we render it, without the works of the law ; as the continuation of the apostle's argument in reference to Abraham shows. Nor can I see what great end could be served by allowing this criticism ; since the apostle elsewhere asserts justification χάρις ἐργῶν without works, (chap. iv. 9.) And to say that ἐργῶν is put elliptically for νόμος ἐργῶν, (that is, works for the law of works,) is very arbitrary. Nor can I conceive that any one can be justified by the law of works without being justified by the works, or vice versa ; and this is expressly Paul's assertion, chap. iv. 4, 5.

^c By the law is the knowledge of sin.] This strongly implies the broken and disjointed state of human nature, in consequence of which the precepts which God gives us, will, on the whole, only serve to convict us of guilt, but not to produce an obedience by which we can finally be acquitted and accepted. Some render it, the law takes cognizance of sin.

^d Attested by the law and the prophets.] See in this view, Gen. xv. 6 ; Isa. liii. ult. ; Dan. ix. 24.

22 Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God:

24 Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to de-

great Messiah: *Even the righteousness of God, which he hath appointed us to seek by the exercise of a living faith on the power and grace of his Son Jesus Christ; to whom he commands us to commit our souls, with all humble and obedient regard. This way of obtaining righteousness and life is now, I say, made manifest to all, and, like a pure, complete, and glorious robe, is put upon all them that believe, whether they were or were not acquainted with, or subject to, the Mosaic law before their conversion to Christianity; for there is in this respect no difference at all between one believer and another: For all have sinned, as we demonstrated above, and come short of the glory of God,^e they have failed of rendering him that glory that was so justly his due, and thereby have not only made themselves unworthy the participation of glory and happiness with him, but stand exposed to his severe and dreadful displeasure: And if any escape it, they are such as, being introduced to embrace the gospel, are justified freely, without pretending to plead any merit of their own, by his rich and sovereign grace, proposed there by virtue of that redemption and deliverance which is in Christ Jesus his well-beloved Son: Whom God hath in his infinite mercy proposed and exhibited to us in the gospel,^f as a propitiation through whom he may honourably discover himself as propitious to us, and converse favourably with us, as he did with Moses from the mercy-seat; an inestimable privilege, which we receive by virtue of faith in his atoning blood, with which the throne of God is, as it were, sprinkled over, as the propitiatory in the tabernacle was with the blood of the sin-of-*

SECT.
VII.
Rom.
iii. 22.

^e Come short of the glory of God.] Mr. Fleming, and after him, if I mistake not, Lord Barrington, explains this *falling short of God's glory*, as signifying the loss of that lucid resemblance of the glorious Shechinah, which they, after Mr. Joseph Mede, suppose our first parents to have worn in their primeval state. But if it were to be granted they had such a glory in that state, I cannot think it would have been natural to have called it God's glory, or to explain the

word *ὀστεργουται* of losing it, which certainly signifies a deficiency of what might have been attained, rather than the loss of what is actually possessed. Compare Mat. xix. 20; 1 Cor. i. 7; Heb. iv. 1; chap. xii. 15.

^f Proposed.] Some contend that *προβέλο* here signifies to exhibit; others, that it signifies to determine, intend, or fix upon. (Compare Bos in loc. and Eph. i. 9, 11; Rom. i. 13.) I have chose the word *propose*, as having just the same ambiguity.

SECT. VII. fering. (Lev. xvi. 15, 16.) And this is appointed for a demonstration of his righteousness in the remission of sins, which now appears to be accomplished without any reflection upon that awful attribute which might seem to have a claim so directly contrary to it; and this remission extends not only to the present but former age, and to all the offences *which are long since past, according to the forbearance of God*, who has forborne to execute judgment upon sinners for their repeated provocations, in reference to that atonement which he knew should in due time

declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Rom.
iii. 25.

26 be made. He has, I say, proposed his Son for a demonstration of his righteousness, which now, in this present ever-memorable and signal time, is so wonderfully illustrated in the great transactions of our own age, intended for this purpose, *that he might be and appear just, and yet at the same time, without impeaching in any degree the rights of his government, the justifier of him who is of the faith of Jesus*, who-soever he be,^s that is, of every one who sincerely believes in him, and acquiesces in that method of salvation which God hath published by him, and established in his perfect obedience and meritorious sufferings.

26 To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

27 Contemplate, I beseech you, this only way of redemption and acceptance, and say, *Where then [is] boasting* in our own righteousness, or on account of any other peculiar privileges? Or what reason can any who partake of these blessings have to glory in themselves? You will easily see that *it is entirely excluded*. And reflect farther, *by what law* is it excluded? [*By the law*] of works? by that of Moses, or any other law promising life only to perfect obedience, and threatening all disobedience with inevitable death? By no means. This would leave a man all the little reason for boasting he could possibly have;

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay;

[^s Just and the justifier, &c.] By just Mr. Taylor would understand merciful, and Mr. Locke faithful to his promises; but either of these makes but a very cold sense when compared with that we have here given. It is no way wonderful that God should be merciful, or faithful to his promises, though the justifier of believing sinners; but that he should be

just in such an act might have seemed incredible, had we not received such an account of the propitiation and atonement. But our explication is vindicated in a most masterly and unanswerable manner by the worthy author of an excellent tract, entitled Christ the Mediator, p. 85, &c. to which I with great pleasure refer the reader.

but by the law of faith.

even that he had acted perfectly right and well, and had all that excellence and worth of character which a being in his circumstances could attain. *But* if you suppose him to have recourse to the gospel, *by the law of faith* it must certainly be excluded, since the very constitution of that requires persons to acknowledge themselves sinners, and, as guilty and indigent, to make an humble application to the free mercy of God in Christ for pardon and every other blessing which is necessary to their final happiness.

SECT.

VII.

Rom.
iii. 27.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

We therefore are come to a conclusion of this part of our argument, *that a man, of whatever nation, profession, or character, is justified by a true, lively, and effectual faith in the gospel, without the works of the law;*^h that is, though destitute of any legal works in consequence of which he could claim justification and life.

29 *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *Is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

And this naturally leaves room to add, [*Is* 29 *God,*] who hath established such a method of justification, *the God of the Jews only, and not also of the Gentiles?* Surely he is the God of the Gentiles too; since it is very evident that all claim from works being thus universally given up, the Jews and Gentiles must in this respect stand upon a level. *So that [it is] one God,* the same eternal and unchangeable Jehovah, *that will justify the Jews, who have received circumcision, not by that, but by faith; and will justify the Gentiles too, who are still in their uncircumcision, through the same faith; and therefore demands the grateful love and the new obedience of both.*ⁱ

30 Seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

30

31 Do we then

Now while we maintain this method of justification and salvation, can it be said that we derogate from the honour of God's justice or

^h A lively and effectual faith without works, &c.] By thus guarding the assertion we sufficiently see how very consistent it is with that of St. James, (chap. ii. 17, 23, 25,) who only in effect asserts that no faith can suffice to our justification which is not in fact productive of obedience; and when the matter is thus stated, there is no appearance of contradiction.

ⁱ One God that justifieth the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.] Mr. Locke would render it *seeing God is*

one, and supposes it an allusion to the prediction, Zech. xiv. 9, that the Lord shall be one and his name one; fulfilled by the publication of the gospel. But I think this supposed allusion far-fetched, and see not any occasion for supposing *ἐκ πίστεως*, by faith, and *διὰ πίστεως*, through faith, to signify different things; nor can I see what different idea can here be affixed to them. L'Enfant renders it, *he will justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision by the same faith.*

SECT. his law? *Do we set aside the law by faith as if* make void the law
 VII. *it were a fault, or annihilate it as if it were an* through faith? God
 ——— *useless thing? God forbid that we should ever* forbid; yea, we es-
 Rom. insinuate such a design or entertain such a tablish the law.
 iii. 31. thought. *Nay, on the contrary, we really estab-*
lish the law^k on a firmer foundation than ever,
and place it in a juster and more beautiful point
of light: for we show also its honour displayed
in the atonement as well as the obedience of
Christ; and we make it of everlasting use for
attesting the truth and illustrating the necessity
of the gospel, as well as for directing the lives
of men when they profess to have received it;
as we shall abundantly show in the process of
this discourse.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET our whole souls rejoice in this glorious display of the
 divine mercy, in so beautiful an harmony with divine justice,
 in our redemption by Christ; to which the apostle in this section
 Ver. 20. bears so noble a testimony. We are all become guilty before
 God; so that if he should mark iniquity, no flesh living could be
 justified before him: let us therefore, with all reverence and
 21 esteem, and with all joy, embrace the righteousness of God as
 22 now attested by the law and prophets, by Christ and his apostles,
 which shall be upon all believers without any difference; hum-
 bling ourselves deeply in the presence of God, as those who
 23 have sinned and come short of his glory, and seeking to be
 24 justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in
 Christ Jesus.
 25 To him let us continually look as the great propitiation; ex-
 ercising faith in his blood, and rejoicing that those which seemed
 to our feeble apprehensions the most jarring attributes, are now
 27 reconciled and glorified. Let us readily acknowledge that boast-
 ing is excluded; and in the grateful overflowings of our souls
 fall down before that throne whence pardons are dispensed, and
 confess “that this act of grace is our only plea,” and that we
 must remain humble before God for ever, in a sense of the de-
 merit of our sins and the abundance of his mercy.
 29, 30 Let Jews and Gentiles unite in thanksgivings to God and in
 love to each other, as having been all involved in the same con-
 demnation, and all partakers of the same compassion. And let
 31 Christians remember that God intended by this illustrious display

^k *We establish the law.] Some render it, Nay, but we are the persons that observe the law; which is a just and strong thought, (compare Rom. viii. 3, 4,) but,*

I think, not the proper signification of ἵσχυμεν.—For the justness of this inference, see Christ the Med. p. 90—96.

of grace, not to supersede but to establish the law. May we therefore make it our concern, that not only the actions of our lives, but the sentiments of our hearts, be directed and determined by it! as it is now enforced by more powerful motives than when it appeared in its unallayed terrors.

SECT.
VII.

SECT. VIII.

The apostle here shows that Abraham and David sought justification in such a way as the gospel recommends, that is, by faith. Rom. iv. 1—12.

ROMANS IV. 1.

WHAT shall we say then, that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

ROMANS IV. 1.

I HAVE been observing to you that we Christians, by maintaining the doctrine of justification by faith, instead of superseding and enervating do indeed establish the divine law, and assert, in the most convincing manner, both its authority and purity. For the illustration of this, therefore, let us consider the important instance of Abraham, and the manner in which he was justified. *What then shall we say that the holy patriarch Abraham, our reverend father according to the flesh, hath found effectual in this respect?^a and to what must his justification and acceptance with God be ascribed? For if² Abraham were justified by circumcision, or by the merit of any other works, rather than by the free grace and mercy of God, then he hath something in which he may glory;^b but it is certain, by what the sacred oracles express, that though the behaviour of this celebrated person was indeed innocent, fair, and honourable before men, yet [he hath] not any thing to boast in the sight of God. For what saith the scripture upon this³*

SECT.
VIII.

Rom.
iv. 1.

² For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God.

³ For what saith the scripture? Abra-

^a *Hath found.*] Some would transpose the words, and render them, "Shall we say that our father Abraham hath found, that is, obtained, justification and life according to the flesh, that is, by circumcision and observing the carnal rites of the Mosaic economy?" But when the natural order and usual import of the phrase makes so easy and so good a sense, I can see no reason for admitting this construction. Raphellus shows that Herodotus and other authentic Greek

authors use *ἐπίστω* for obtaining, and that by merit. Annot. ex Herod. in Loc.

^b *He hath something in which he may glory.*] This seems to intimate that the Jews maintained not only the necessity but the merit of the Jewish observances; else it might have been replied, that Abraham was indeed justified upon his being circumcised, but that it was by the grace of God in freely annexing the promise of justification and life to such a rite.

SECT. head? (Gen. xv. 6.) "*Abraham believed God,* ham believed God, and it was counted
VIII. "when he made him the promise of that mira- and it was counted
— "culous and important seed, *and so it was im-* unto him for right-
Rom. "puted to him, or placed to his account, *for* ousness.
iv. 3. "righteousness, or in order to his justification:"

that is, God was pleased graciously to accept it, though he had not that complete and perfect righteousness which might in strict justice be demanded of every rational creature as the only condition of his being acquitted at the divine

4 bar. *Now to him who thus worketh to the ut-* most extent of all that was required, *the reward* proportioned to that work *is not charged to ac-* count as matter of *grace,*^c but of debt; and he may glory at least in having diligently earned

5 it. (Compare chap. xi. 6.) *But to him who in* this sense *worketh not*, who can by no means pretend to have wrought all righteousness, *but* humbly *believeth on him who* declareth the freedom of pardoning grace, and by that *justifieth* even *the ungodly*, if he repent and return, the phrase used concerning Abraham may be applied with the strictest propriety, and it may be said that *his faith is imputed to him*, or placed to his account, *for righteousness*, or to the purpose of his being accepted and treated by God as righteous.

6 *And [this is] very agreeable to what we read* elsewhere; particularly as *David* (Psal. xxxii. 1, 2.) *describeth the blessedness of the man who is* accepted of God, whom he speaks of as "one *to whom God*, according to the method of "proceeding we now maintain, *imputeth right-* "eousness, *without any supposition of, or re-* "gard to, a former series of good works sup- "posed to have been performed by him."

7 For he expresses himself thus: "*Blessed are they* "whose iniquities are pardoned, and whose sins "are as it were covered^d by the veil of di-

4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt:

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works;

7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered:

^c *As of grace.*] Raphelius has shown that *μισθον* does not only signify a reward of debt, but also a gift of favour; and that the phrase *μισθον δωρεν* occurs in Herodotus: so that a reward of grace or favour is a classical as well as theological expression.—Could we be sure that Abraham was once an idolater, it would be some illustration of the apostle's reasoning

here; but the validity of it by no means depends upon that fact.

^d *Whose iniquity is pardoned and whose sin is covered.*] Archbishop Leighton has so elegantly and beautifully illustrated these words, that I must beg leave to refer those of my readers that cannot use his Latin meditations on the xxxi^{id} Psalm, to review the English translation

5 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. *“ vine mercy: Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not sin.”* Which plainly implies that sin had been committed by the best and happiest of men, and that it is matter of mercy and favour that it is not charged to account, so that he should finally be condemned for it. SECT. VIII. Rom. iv. 8.

9 *Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also?* For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. *Now while we are speaking of this blessedness 9 of the pardoned and accepted sinner, give me leave to ask, [doth it come] upon the circumcision [only,] or also on the uncircumcision? The celebrated instance we have just been mentioning will show how far circumcision is from being necessary to a share in it: For [when] we say, as above, that faith was imputed to Abraham for righteousness,^e How and when was it thus imputed and charged to his account, in this view? When he was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? [Truly] the history plainly shows us that it was not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision; for it relates this important circumstance of Abraham as taking place many years before circumcision was instituted.^f*

10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. *And it assures us that he received the sign of 11 circumcision, not as the means of making him acceptable to God when he was not before so, but as the token of his being already accepted; and therefore as the seal of the righteousness of that faith which he had in uncircumcision:^g that*

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he

of it in the 2d volume of his Expository Discourses; printed at Edinburgh, 1748.

^e *Imputed to him for righteousness.*] I think nothing can be easier than to understand how this may be said in full consistence with our being justified by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, that is, our being treated by God as righteous for the sake of what he has done and suffered; for though this be the meritorious cause of our acceptance with God, yet faith may be said to be imputed to us, *ως δικαιοσύνην*, in order to our being justified or becoming righteous; that is, according to the view in which I have elsewhere more largely stated it, as we are charged as debtors in the book of God's account, what Christ has done in fulfilling all righteousness for us is charged as the grand balance of the account; but that it may appear that we are, according to the tenour of the gospel,

entitled to the benefit of this, it is also entered in the book of God's remembrance “that we are believers;” and this appearing, we are graciously discharged, yea and rewarded, as if we ourselves had been perfectly innocent and obedient. See my Sermons on Salvation by Grace, p. 14—19; which account is perfectly agreeable to what Witsius has remarked, Econ. Fed. lib. iii. chap. viii. § 36.

^f Many years before circumcision was instituted.] It is said this imputation was made on Abraham's believing the promise, Gen. xv. 6, about a year before the birth of Ishmael; but he did not receive circumcision till Ishmael was thirteen years old, Gen. xvii. 27; consequently Abraham was declared justified at least fourteen years before he was circumcised.

^g *Seal of the righteousness of faith.*] This seems an incontestable proof that

SECT. so he might be the father of all those who believe
 VIII. in uncircumcision, that righteousness may also
 be imputed unto them, that they may be justified
 in the same means, and that it may be writ-
 ten down in the book of God's remembrance

Rom.
 iv. 11.

12 that they are so. And he received this right
 by divine appointment, that he might also be the
 father of the circumcision, that is, to those who
 should afterwards practise it, and were not only
 partakers of the external ceremony of circum-
 cision, which in itself indeed can have no effi-
 cacy, but shall also walk in the footsteps of that
 faith of our father Abraham which he had in
 uncircumcision, and which rendered him so dear
 to God while he was in that state.

might be the father
 of all them that be-
 lieve, though they
 be not circumcised :
 that righteousness
 might be imputed
 unto them also;

12 And the father
 of circumcision to
 them who are not of
 the circumcision
 only, but also walk
 in the steps of that
 faith of our father
 Abraham, which he
 had being yet uncir-
 cumcised.

IMPROVEMENT.

IF there be indeed such a thing as happiness to be enjoyed by
 mortal man, it is the portion of that man of whom David speaks,
 Ver. 7, 8. even of him whose iniquity is pardoned and whose sin is cov-
 ered, and who enjoys the manifestation of that pardon. Well
 may he endure the greatest afflictions of life with cheerfulness,
 and look forward to death with comfort, when the sting of all
 these evils is taken out, and the returning tokens of the Divine
 favour convert them into blessings. Oh let us earnestly pray that
 this happiness may be ours; that the great and glorious Being
 whom by our sins we have offended, and in whom alone the
 right and power of pardon resides, would spread the veil of his
 mercy over our provocations, and blot them out of the book of
 his remembrance!

Let us on the one hand fix it in our mind, that it is the cha-
 racter of that man to whom this blessedness belongs, that in his
 spirit there is no guile; and on the other, let us often reflect
 that it is in consequence of a righteousness which God imputes,
 and which faith receives and embraces. We are saved by a
 scheme that allows us not to mention any works of our own, as
 1, 2 if we had whereof to glory before God, but teaches us to
 ascribe our salvation to believing on him who justifieth the un-
 5 godly. Nor need we be ashamed of flying to such a method, to
 1, 2 which Abraham the father of the faithful had recourse himself,
 and on which he built his eternal hope. May we share his dis-
 position of mind, that we may inherit the same promises, walk-
 12 ing in the footsteps of our father Abraham ! So shall we also be

circumcision was a seal of the covenant
 of grace, and not merely of temporal
 promises; and consequently obviates

the most considerable objection that
 hath ever been urged against infant-
 baptism.

called the friends and children of God, and sit down with **SECT.**
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in his heavenly kingdom. **VIII.**

SECT. IX.

In order to recommend the scheme of justification by believing God's promises, the apostle shows that it was an illustrious act of faith which entailed everlasting honours on the great patriarch Abraham; in which he was intended for an example to us. Rom. iv. 13, to the end.

ROMANS IV. 13.

FOR the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

ROMANS IV. 13.

I HAVE spoken of Abraham as the father of **SECT.**
uncircumcised believers as well as those of **IX.**
the circumcision, (ver. 11, 12.) and that with
evident propriety; for the promise to Abraham
and his seed, that he should be heir of the world,^a
that is, that he should inherit all the nations of
the earth as a seed that should be blessed in
him, was not and could not be by the law of
circumcision or of Moses, being, as we have
already observed, prior to both; but it was by the
righteousness of faith. God gave him that pro-
mise on his exerting a remarkable act of faith,
on which God in the most gracious and honour-
able manner declared his acceptance of him as
righteous. Now if they who are of the law,¹⁴
and depend upon that alone, [are] heirs exclu-
sive of all others, (as some so eagerly contend,)
then that faith which in the instance before us
was so eminently honoured of God, is made use-
less, and treated as a thing of no value; and so
the promise made to it is in effect abrogated, the
performance of it being put, not only on new
conditions, but on such as cannot be perfectly
performed in this sinful state.^b For the law¹⁵

Rom.
iv. 13.

¹⁴ For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

¹⁵ Because the law

^a Heir of the world.] *Κοσμος* cannot here signify, as *γῆ* sometimes does, one country or land, how fine or large soever. It must therefore imply his inheriting a seed out of all nations, whom he might be said to possess in such a sense as children are said to be an heritage, *Psal. cxxvii. 3.* Compare *Gen. iv. 1*; *Prov. xvii. 6.* See also *Psal. lxxviii. 8*, where God is said to inherit the nations that are taken into his family on the profession of the true religion.

^b Cannot be perfectly performed.] This is here said with reference to a moral impossibility. It seems evident from what follows, that the law is to be considered as insisting on an obedience absolutely perfect; so that these good men who were justified under it, were not justified by it, but by the dispensation of grace under which Abraham was, which, though not a part of the covenant of God by Moses, was not and could not be abrogated by it. Compare *Gal. iii. 17.*

SECT. of God, considered in itself alone, and without
 IX. any regard to that grace which, though it was
 Rom. in fact mingled with it, yet makes no part of the
 iv. 15. legal dispensation as such, is so extensive and
 difficult, and we are so weak and sinful, that in
 fact, instead of securing to us the promised bless-
 ings, it only *worketh wrath*, that is, it becomes
 to us accidentally an occasion of wrath, and ex-
 poses us to punishment as transgressors; *for*
where there is no law, either revealed or inti-
 mated, [*there is*] *no transgression*; but the
 multiplication of precepts increases the danger
 of offending, and the clearer declaration of those
 precepts aggravates the guilt attending the vio-

worketh wrath; for
where no law is, there
is no transgression.

16 lation. But *therefore* [*it*,] that is, the promise
 and the inheritance to which it relates, [*is*] *of*
faith, or annexed to it, *that it* [*might be*] *of*
grace; that God might magnify the riches of his
 grace in proposing justification and life to us in
 a way that might in multitudes of instances be
 effectual, *that* so the blessing exhibited in the
promise might be firm and secure to all the be-
lieving seed, not only to that part of his de-
scendants which was placed under the dispensa-
tion of the Jewish law, who are not indeed ex-
 cluded from it if they seek it in a proper man-
 ner, *but to that which is* the seed of that holy
 patriarch to whom the promise was made by
 a nobler relation, even by a participation *of the*
faith of Abraham, who is in this view the father
 17 *of us all: As it is written*, (Gen. xvii. 16,) *I*
have made thee a father, not of one family alone
 to descend from Isaac or Jacob, but *of many*
nations: so that he is in some degree even *like*
God himself,^c who is the Father of all good
 men; like that Almighty Being *in whom he be-*
lieved as re-animating those who are dead, and
calling into action and enjoyment things that
are not now in existence, with the same ease as
those that are.^d

16 Therefore *it is*
of faith, that it might
be by grace; to the
end the promise
might be sure to all
the seed, not to that
only which is of the
law, but to that also
which is of the faith
of Abraham, who is
the father of us all;

17 (As it is writ-
 ten, I have made thee
 a father of many na-
 tions,) before him
 whom he believed,
 even God, who quick-
 eneth the dead, and
 calleth those things
 which be not as
 though they were:

18 And since I have begun to touch upon it, per-
 mit me, my brethren, to animate your faith by
 dilating a little farther upon that of this illus-

18 Who against

^c Like God.] So I think *καὶ ὡς θεός* may
 here signify; and accordingly it is ren-
 dered *ad instar Dei* by Paræus.

^d Calling things that are not.] That this

is to be understood of summoning them,
 as it were, to rise into being, and ap-
 pear before him, Elsner has well proved
 on this place.

hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about ~~en~~ hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb.

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him;

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

25 Who was delivered for our of-

trious patriarch. It was he *who, against all human and probable hope, believed with an assured and joyful hope, on the security of the divine word, that, unlikely as it seemed, he should be a father of many nations, according to that which was spoken to him* (Gen. xv. 5.) when he was called to take a view of the stars of heaven, and God said, "*So numerous and glorious shall thy seed be.*" And having received such a promise, *not being feeble in faith, how feeble soever he might be in his animal constitution, he considered not his own body, which, with regard to the probability of begetting children, was now dead, being about an hundred years old; nor the deadness of Sarah's womb, of whom the sacred historian tells us, "that it ceased to be with her after the manner of women."* (Gen. xviii. 11.) Amidst all these difficulties and discour-
agements, *he objected not to the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened by the exercise of the most vigorous and triumphant faith, thereby giving a due and becoming glory to the great God, the Lord of universal nature; And was confidently persuaded, that what he had thus graciously promised he was, and ever is, able to perform, though that performance should, to sensible view, seem ever so improbable. And therefore this heroic faith was so acceptable to the Divine Being, that it was, as we have heard again and again, imputed or accounted to him for righteousness, that is, in order to his justification. Neither was it written in the sacred records, which are to reach the remotest ages, with regard to him only, or chiefly to do a personal honour to that illustrious patriarch, that it was thus imputed to him; But also for our sakes, to whom it, that is, the like faith, shall also be imputed, if we steadily believe in him who not only brought Isaac as from the dead womb of Sarah, but, in the most literal sense, raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, when he lay among them slain and mangled by his cruel enemies: Even that great and glorious Redeemer who was delivered up to them by the determinate counsel of God, that by his death and sufferings he might atone for our many offences, and, when he had fully satisfied the*

SECT.
IX.
Rom.
iv. 18.

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

SECT. divine justice for them,^e was raised again for fences, and was raised again for our justification.

IX. our justification: that putting our trust in him who was thus apparently discharged from all farther claim upon him as our surety, we might obtain, by virtue of our relation to him, plenary pardon and eternal life.

Rom.
iv. 23.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us continually bear in our mind the great and venerable example of our father Abraham; labour to the utmost to trace his steps, and have faith in God, who at his pleasure quickeneth the dead, and calleth things which are not as if they were. If sense were to judge, it would pronounce many of these difficulties invincible which lie in the way of the accomplishment of his promises; but they shall all be fulfilled in their season. Let us therefore be strong in faith, remembering that thus it becomes us to glorify that God who condescends so far as to engage the honour of his word for the support of our souls. He who hath promised is able to perform, for with him all things are possible. Already hath he done that for us which we had much less reason to expect than we now have to hope for any thing that remains: He delivered his Son Jesus for our offences, to redeem us by his blood from final and everlasting ruin.

Let it be our daily joy that he was raised again for our justification; and let his resurrection be continually considered as a noble argument to establish our faith in him who performed this illustrious work of power and mercy. So shall it be imputed to us likewise for righteousness; yea, so shall the righteousness of our Redeemer be reckoned as ours, to all the purposes of our justification and acceptance with God. And though, by our transgression of the law, we can never inherit by any claim from that which only worketh wrath and condemnation in consequence of our breach of it; yet shall we, by believing and obeying the gospel, find the promise sure to us as the spiritual seed of Abraham, and be for ever happy in the enjoyment of that better Canaan, when every earthly inheritance shall be no more found.

^e Fully satisfied the divine justice for them.] By satisfying the divine justice, I mean, "doing all that was necessary amply and perfectly to secure the honour of the divine government in the pardon and acceptance of penitent and believing sinners;" but I do not mean "the payment of the debt, in such a sense as that our engagements to holiness should be dispensed

"with or in any degree weakened, or our obligation to the free grace of the Father in our salvation transferred or enervated." And I desire it may be remembered and attended to throughout, that this is the sense in which I would use the phrase wherever it occurs in any of my writings, and I hope it will not be found that I have ever deviated from it.

SECT. X.

The excellency of the gospel-dispensation is farther illustrated, believers being hereby brought into so happy a state as turns even the heaviest afflictions of life into an occasion of joy. Rom. v. 1—11.

ROMANS v. 1.

THEREFORE being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ:

ROMANS v. 1.

WE have been reviewing the manner in which Abraham and David, those illustrious patriarchs, looked for justification and happiness, and in which we are to seek it if we desire to succeed. We have been speaking of our adorable Saviour as delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification: Let us now *therefore* reflect a little on those invaluable benefits which we who have embraced this dispensation, whether Jews or Gentiles, enjoy in consequence of it. And here it is in the first place evident, that *being thus justified by means of faith in Christ, we have peace with God:*^a Our guilty fears are silenced, and we are taught to look up to him with sweet serenity of soul, while we no longer conceive of him as an enemy, but under the endearing character of a friend and father; even *through the mediation and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom we have been introduced,*^b *by means of*

SECT.
X.

Rom.
v. 1.

² By whom also we have access, by

^a *We have peace with God.*] It seems very unreasonable to suppose that when the apostle wrote such passages as this and Eph. i. 1—3, he should mean to exclude himself, who was no Gentile; they are not therefore to be expounded as spoken particularly of the Gentiles: nor could he surely intend by these grand descriptions and pathetic representations, to speak only of such external privileges as might have been common to Simon Magus, or any other hypocritical and wicked professor of Christianity. And if he did not intend this, he must speak of all true Christians as such, and as taking it for granted that those to whom he addressed this and his other epistles were in the general such, though there might be some few excepted cases which he does not think it necessary often to touch upon. And this is, after all, the true key to such passages in his epistles, and as such I have used it throughout my work; and as I

have more particularly stated and vindicated it in the postscript which I have added to the preface of my Sermons on Regeneration, in the second edition, I must beg leave to refer my reader thither, and hope I shall be excused from a more particular examination of that very different scheme of interpretation which Mr. Taylor has so laboriously attempted to revive. The main principles of it are, I think, well confuted by my pious and worthy friend Dr. Guyse, in the preface to his Paraphrase of this Epistle.

^b *We have been introduced:* την προσαγωγην εσχημαμεν.] Raphelius has shown from Herodotus, that προσαγωγή is often used as a sacerdotal phrase, and signifies “being with great solemnity introduced” “as into the more immediate presence of” “a deity in his temple, so as, by a supposed interpreter, from thence called” “προσαγωγεις, the introducer, to have a” “kind of conference with such a deity.”

SECT. *faith, into that state of grace and acceptance in* faith, into this grace
 X. *which we now stand with humble boldness in* wherein we stand,
 — his presence, and cheerful confidence that no- and rejoice in hope
 Rom. thing shall remove us from his favour. *And by* of the glory of God.
 v. 2. a farther consequence, we do not only rejoice in
 some considerable present privileges, but *boast*
 in a pleasant and assured *hope of inheriting at*
 length *the glory of God*, a state of perpetual
 splendour and happiness in the house and pre-
 sence of our heavenly Father, in which he will,
 as it were, adorn us with the rays of his own
 3 glory. *And not only do we so boast in this hope,* 3 And not only so,
but we also glory in our tribulation^c and afflic- but we glory in tribu-
 tion, which, far from esteeming, as the Jews are lations also, know-
 ready to do, any token of reprobation or dis- ing that tribulation
 pleasure, we look upon as being, in this connec- worketh patience,
 tion, the allotment of God's paternal love to
 us, that we may thereby be enabled to do him
 a more singular honour, and be prepared for a
 more exalted happiness; *knowing that tribula-*
 tion, under the influence of divine grace, *work-*
 eth a calm, silent, humble *patience*, a most
 beautiful and happy disposition of mind, which
 4 is daily strengthened by exercise: *And this* 4 And patience
patience produceth such an *experience* of God's experience, and ex-
 supporting goodness, and such proof of our perience hope:
 own sincere faith,^d strict integrity, and steady
 resolution for him, as we are sure will be ac-
 ceptable to him; *and therefore this experience*
 and proof of our graces, which like pure gold
 brighten in the furnace, worketh a more live-
 ly and triumphant *hope* of a glorious future re-
 5 ward. *And this hope*, sublime and confident 5 And hope mak-
 as it is, *does not shame and confound [us] with* eth not ashamed,
 disappointment; yea, we know it cannot, *be-* because the love of
 cause we have already within ourselves the
 very beginning of that heaven at which it as-
 pires. *For the love of God*, in the perfection
 of which the blessedness of that celestial world

^c *We glory also in tribulation.*] The Jews might object to the persecution of Christians, (as we know they did to that of their Master,) as inconsistent with what they concluded would be the state of the people of the Messiah. It is therefore with great propriety that the apostle so often discourses on the benefit arising from the sufferings of true believers, by which he lays in the strongest answer to any such insinuation. And

this delicacy of address is so apparent in many passages of the epistles, that I should swell the notes too much if I were accurately to trace it.

^d *Proof of our faith.*] Mons. Saurin very justly observes that the word *δοξασθαι* has this signification, and in a metaphor taken from gold proved by purifying fire. Compare 1 Pet. i. 7: see Eccles. ii. 5; Saur. Serm. Vol. VII. p. 159.

God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us:

consists, is in a plentiful effusion poured into our hearts by his Holy Spirit, which is given unto us, and enables us to see his love amidst all his corrections, and to delight ourselves daily in him, though for the present he appoint us trials which may seem ever so rigorous.

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Now all these invaluable privileges and hopes, which make our lives so joyful amidst such various tribulations and extreme sufferings, are to be traced up to the death of Christ, and resolved into his love; for when we were yet in a weak and languishing, infirm and helpless state, destitute of all these divine principles and hopes, yea incapable of delivering ourselves from the depths of guilt and misery into which we were plunged, Christ most seasonably died for us, even in the stead of the ungodly,^e for Jews and Gentiles, when they were, as we have proved before, all under sin.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will

Now^f this is a most memorable thing, and worthy our frequent, attentive, and affectionate consideration: For scarcely would one be willing to die in the stead of a righteous man, though we apprehended him in the most immediate danger; [if] perhaps, in the stead of a remarkably good and benevolent man,^g one would even dare to

^e Died in the stead of the ungodly.] By ungodly here, Mr. Locke understands Gentiles; as also, by weak sinners, enemies, &c. They are undoubtedly included; but it seems very inconsistent with the whole strain of the apostle's argument in the preceding chapters, to confine it to them. Compare chap. iii. 9—20, 22, 23; iv. 5; v. 20. I therefore all along explain such passages in the most extensive sense; and think nothing in the whole New Testament plainer than that the gospel supposes every human creature to whom it is addressed to be in a state of guilt and condemnation, and incapable of being accepted with God any otherwise than through the grace and mercy which it proclaims. Compare John iii. 16, 36; chap. v. 24; 1 John iii. 14; Mark xvi. 15, 16; Luke xxiv. 47; and especially 1 John i. 10, than which no assertion can be more positive and express. Albert (Observ. Sacr. p. 304.) has well proved that καὶ ἡμεῖς should be rendered seasonably, and Raphelius (Not. ex Xen. in ver. 8.) has abundantly

demonstrated that ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπεθῆκε signifies he died in our room and stead; nor can I find that ἀποθῆναι ὑπὲρ τινος has ever any other signification than that of rescuing the life of another at the expense of our own; and the very next verse shows, independent on any other authority, how evidently it bears that sense here; as one can hardly imagine any one would die for a good man, unless it were to redeem his life by giving up his own. How much higher not only Grotius, but Le Clerc, carried their explanations of this great doctrine than some moderns have done, may be seen by consulting Grotius's gloss on 1 Pet. ii. 19, (De Satisf. cap. ix.) and Le Clerc on John i. 29.

^f Now: γὰρ.] It is very evident that γὰρ cannot have the force of an illative particle here or in the preceding verse; and it is hardly possible to number all the passages in Paul's writings to which the like remark may be applied.

^g Righteous,—good.] It is true that in one sense righteousness must include good-

56 *Justified by Christ's death, we shall be saved by his life.*

- SECT. *die*; for certainly it is but here and there one
 x. in a great multitude who would be willing to
 ——— redeem the most eminently useful life at the
 Rom. price of his own. *But God hath recommended*
 v. 8. *his astonishing love towards us, and set it off*
as it were with this grand circumstance of high
embellishment, if I may so speak, that when we
were yet sinners, and therefore not only unde-
-serving of his favour, but justly obnoxious to
wrath and punishment, Christ died in our stead,
that our guilt might be cancelled, and we
 9 *brought into a state of divine acceptance. Since*
therefore it hath pleased the blessed God to
give us such an unexampled display of his love
as this, how high may our expectations rise, and
how cheerfully may we conclude, that much more
being now justified by the efficacy of his most
precious blood, we shall be saved from wrath by
him! For we can never imagine that God would
 provide at so expensive a rate for our justifica-
 tion, and then finally leave us under wrath,
 though we have acquiesced in the scheme of
 his grace for our deliverance.
- 10 *For if, as I have already maintained, when*
we were enemies, through the perverseness of
our minds and the rebellion of our lives, we
were reconciled to God by the death of his own
dear Son; and if, foreseeing we should fall into
this state of hostility, he made this wonderful
provision for our being admitted to terms of
peace, how much more, being thus reconciled,
shall we be saved from misery and made com-
pletely happy by his recovered life, now he is
risen from the dead and ascended to glory!
- one die; yet perad-
 venture for a good
 man some would
 even dare to die.
 8 But God com-
 mendeth his love to-
 wards us, in that
 while we were yet
 sinners, Christ died
 for us.
 9 Much more then,
 being now justified
 by his blood, we
 shall be saved from
 wrath through him.
 10 For if when we
 were enemies, we
 were reconciled to
 God by the death of
 his Son; much more
 being reconciled, we
 shall be saved by his
 life.

ness, as we owe to every man a benevo-
 lent affection, and are bound in duty to
 God to do all the good we can to the
 whole human species. But he may in
 common speech be called a *just* or *right-*
eous man who gives to every one what
 is by law his due, and *he a good or bene-*
volent man who voluntarily abounds in
 kind and generous actions to which no
 human laws can compel him. Tully has
 the like distinction, (de Offic. lib. 1.
 cap. x. edit. Pierc.) and it is admirably
 illustrated by Raphelius, (Not. ex Xen.
 in loc.) by apposite quotations from
 other ancient writers. It may very
 possibly (as Godwin has shown in his

Jewish Antiquities, lib. 1. cap. ix.) bear
 some allusion to a distribution of man-
 kind into the three classes, חסידים,
 צדקים, and רשעים, *good men, righteous*
men, and sinners, which some rabbinical
 writers mention.—All the beauty and
 grace of this passage is lost by reading
 ἀδικῶν instead of δίκαιον, as the editor of
 the new version of 1727 does, without,
 as I can find, any single authority: *For*
a wicked man no one would willingly die,
though for a benefactor some have readily of-
fered to die. And ἀγαθὸς does not signify
 merely a *personal benefactor*, but in ge-
 neral a *benevolent man*.

IMPROVEMENT.

WITH what ecstasies of holy joy may we justly survey these inestimable privileges, the blessed consequences of having embraced the gospel and being justified by faith unfeigned! How great a happiness to have peace with God, with that Omnipotent Being who can at pleasure arm all nature against us or for us! to have access to him by Jesus Christ, and daily converse with him as our Father in heaven! to rejoice in an assured hope of enjoying glory with Christ in his presence, yea of enjoying the God of glory! to see all affliction not only disarmed but turned into matter of triumph, while tribulation worketh experience, patience, and hope! So may all our tribulations work; and be they ever so severe, they will be reasons for our joy and praise. The pain of them will soon be over, the happy consequences of them will be as lasting as our immortal souls.

Let us endeavour to dilate our hearts, that we may receive the largest effusions of the love of God to be shed abroad there. The love of God! that plant of paradise, which will spring up unto eternal life. And to excite it, let us be daily meditating upon the rich wonders of redeeming love and grace; adoring that seasonable interposition of divine mercy, that when we were weak and guilty creatures, when we lay for ever helpless under a sentence of everlasting condemnation, that is, when we appeared thus in the eyes of him who beholdeth things which are not as if they were, Christ died for us, and gave a token of his love even for the worst of sinners, which few among the children of men are willing to give with respect to the most upright and benevolent of their brethren. Since the love of God comes thus recommended, let us cordially embrace it, and awaken all the powers of our souls to a diligent care to secure the happy fruits, that we may not receive the grace of God in vain. If we do indeed experience in ourselves, not only that there is a foundation laid for our reconciliation, but that we are actually reconciled to God by the death of his Son, our hopes may rise high that we shall much more obtain consummate salvation by his life. For surely it is infinitely more astonishing that the Son of God should die to reconcile enemies, than that having subdued their hearts by his dying love, and received them to friendship as the purchase of his blood, he should employ his recovered life and extensive authority for their protection and complete salvation.

SECT.

X.

Ver. 1.

3, 4

10

S E C T. XI.

The apostle shows that the calamities brought by the first Adam on his seed are repaired, with glorious advantage, to all who, by faith, become interested in the second Adam. Rom. v. 11, to the end.

ROMANS v. 11.

SECT.
XI.

Rom.
v. 11.

I HAVE been breathing out our hopes and our joys, as we are Christians, and are taught by the principles of our divine religion, to rejoice, not only in the prospect of glory, but even in tribulation itself. *And now I must add, that it is not only [so,] but that there is another grand consideration which, though not yet mentioned, lies at the root of all our confidence and happiness; which is this, that we boast in God as invariably our covenant God and Father through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom we have now, in these last times, received the great and important reconciliation,^a which not only averts the terrors of his wrath, but opens upon us all the blessings of his perpetual friendship and love.*

- 12 And *therefore^b* we may from these premises infer that the benefit which we believers receive from Christ^c is equal to the detriment we receive from Adam, yea, is on the whole greater than that; for we now obtain righteousness and life from one, *as by one man, that is, Adam, the common father of the human species, sin entered into the new-made world, and death, before unknown in the creation of God, entered by sin; and so death passed on from one generation to another upon all men, unto which all*

ROMANS v. 11.

AND not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

^a *Received the reconciliation.*] The word *καταλλαγή* here has so apparent a reference to *κατήλλαγμα* and *καταλλαγές* in the preceding verse, that it is surprising it should have been rendered by so different a word in our version; especially as it is so improper to speak of our receiving an atonement, which God receives as made for our sins.

^b *Therefore.*] *Δια τούτο* certainly does often signify in this respect; but there are some instances, even among the texts collected by Mr. Taylor here, in which it may as well be rendered *therefore*; particularly Mat. xiii. 13; John ix. 23; chap. xii. 18; chap. xiii. 2; 1 Cor. iv. 17; chap. xi. 30; Eph. i. 15. In all which places our rendering seems preferable to what he would propose.

^c *We believers.*] As this 12th verse is an inference from the 11th, it seems evident that they only are spoken of; for it is plain, from comparing the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses with the first, that it is only they who are justified by faith who have peace with God, and who joy in him by Christ, as having received the reconciliation. And this obvious remark clears the following passage of difficulties, which would be exceeding great if it were to be considered without regard to this connection, and which have in fact misled many commentators; who for want of attending to it, have plunged themselves and their readers into great perplexity, and given a sense to the paragraph of which it is by no means capable.

13 For until the law, sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression; who is the figure of him that was to come:

have sinned in him;^d that is, they are so far involved in the consequence of his first transgression, as by means of it to become obnoxious to death. And that this was indeed the case, and this offence the engine of mortality in the whole human species, we may infer from one very obvious fact, I mean the death of infants from the very beginning; for from the fall of Adam unto the time when God gave the law by Moses, as well as after it, *sin was* and appeared to be in the world, by the continual execution of its punishment, that is, death. But it is a self-evident principle, that *sin is not* and cannot be imputed where there is no law, since the very essence of sin is the violation of a law. And consequently, if we see in fact that sin was imputed, we must conclude that the persons to whose account it appears to have been charged were under some law. Nevertheless, it is certain 14 death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over infants as well as others, over those, I say, who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam,^e that is, who had never in their own persons offended God as Adam their father did; who, with respect to the extent of his actions to all his seed, was the figure or model^f of him who was to come,^g that is, a kind of

SECT.
XI.
Rom
v. 13.

^d Unto which all have sinned: ἐφ' ὧσαντες ἡμεῖς. Elsner (Observ. Vol. II. p. 26.) would render it on account of whom; and he produces some remarkable authorities for it; (compare Phil. iii. 12; Rom. x. 19; chap. xvi. 19; 1 Thess. iii. 7.) but I think those produced by Mr. Taylor, (from Gal. v. 13; Eph. ii. 19; 1 Thess. iv. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 14.) with the use of the particles in some of the purest Greek classics, sufficient to support his rendering, which I have here followed. See his Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin, Part I. p. 51, &c. note.

^e Likeness of Adam's transgression.] Mr. Locke and several more interpret this of the Gentiles, who did not sin against a positive law: But they might certainly have died for their transgression against the natural law, under which they were born, and for which the apostle expressly asserts, not only that they were in fact liable to perish, (chap. ii. 12, &c.) but that they knew they were worthy of death. (Chap. i. ult.)

^f Figure or model.] That the word τύπος has this signification, will appear

from Acts vii. 44; Rom. vi. 17; Phil. iii. 17; 1 Thess. i. 7; 2 Thess. iii. 9; 1 Tim. iv. 12; Tit. ii. 7; Heb. viii. 5; 1 Pet. v. 3.

^g Of him who was to come: τὸ μέλλον. Here is evidently an ellipsis. Most commentators have explained it as referring to the great person that was to come, or in other words, the future [Adam,] that is, Christ. But Sir Norton Knatchbull would explain it of mankind to come. He thinks that Adam cannot with any propriety be called a type of Christ, as the type of a thing is its shape, model, or representation, and therefore if the thing be good, the type of it must be so too. Dr. Milner, in vindication of this interpretation, observes that this will best agree with the apostle's design: For if Adam was to be considered as a public person, the type, figure, or representation of mankind, his conduct will, as the apostle says it does, affect infants. Dr. Milner's Fading Flowers of Life, p. 14.—But it may be sufficient to answer, that upon the common interpretation there was plainly a correspondence be-

SECT. type of the Messiah, as being a public person
XI. and federal head.

Rom.
v. 15.

Yet I must observe by the way, that with respect to the free gift of God in the gospel-dispensation, it *[is]* not exactly as the offence, nor limited in all respects as that is; for if by the offence of one many died, if the whole human family, numerous as it is, become obnoxious to death and destruction thereby, how much more hath the free grace of God, and the gift *[which is granted]* by that grace, as manifested and displayed in that one greater and better man Jesus Christ, abounded to many, that is, to all the numerous family of believers!

- 16 And this in two very important respects. In the first place, the gift *[is]* not merely, as the ruin that came upon us by one that sinned, in respect to the number of offences in question; for the sentence of but one *[offence passed]* upon us to condemnation, and we were no farther affected by the subsequent sins of Adam than by those of an intermediate parent; but the gift of divine grace, exhibited in the gospel, *[is effectual]* to our justification from the guilt of many offences: It not only delivers us from the sentence to which we were from our birth liable on account of Adam's sin, but from that more grievous and dreadful sentence which we had brought upon ourselves in adult life by our innumerable and aggravated personal transgressions. Moreover, there is another important article in which the grace of the gospel exceeds the seeming severity which attended the imputation of guilt from our first father Adam; namely, that if by one man's offence death reigned, by one, over all his posterity, as we observed above, they who thankfully and obediently receive^h the overflowing abundance of free grace, and of the munificent gift of

15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification,

17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gifts

tween Christ and Adam, as each was a public head, though the influence of each on his respective seed was different; so that the whole reasoning of both these learned and ingenious writers seems inconclusive.

^h Thankfully and obediently receive.] It is so very plain that the abundant reign in life by Jesus Christ is appropriated to persons of a particular character, expressed here by receiving the gift, that

it is surprising any should have spoken of it as common to the whole human race. And nothing is more evident than that the word λαμβανω has often this sense, and signifies being active in embracing a benefit proposed, or a person offering himself under a character of importance. Compare John i. 11, 12; chap. iii. 11, 32; chap. v. 43; chap. xii. 48; chap. xiii. 20; Jam. v. 10; 1 John v. 9; 2 John, 10; 3 John, 7.

of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

righteousness exhibited in the gospel, shall much more reign in life by the one great Restorer and Recoverer of his seed, even Jesus Christ; that is, believers shall by him be brought to a much nobler and more excellent life than that from which Adam fell, and which they lost in him.

SECT.

XI.

Rom.
v. 17.

18 Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

Therefore, on the whole, you see, as I began to observe to you before,ⁱ that as [the consequence] of one offence, on the one hand, [extended] to all men, to bring condemnation upon them, so also, on the other side, [the consequence] of one grand act of righteousness [extended] to all men who receive and embrace it, securing to them that justification which will be crowned with the enjoyment of eternal life. For as by the disobedience of one man many were constituted sinners, that is, became obnoxious to death as if they themselves had sinned, so by the complete and persevering obedience of one many shall be constituted righteous;^k that is, they shall be treated as such in the day of God's final account, though they have no perfect righteousness of their own to plead in consequence of which they should stand before God and claim the reward.

18

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

the disobedience of one man many were constituted sinners, that is, became obnoxious to death as if they themselves had sinned, so by the complete and persevering obedience of one many shall be constituted righteous;^k that is, they shall be treated as such in the day of God's final account, though they have no perfect righteousness of their own to plead in consequence of which they should stand before God and claim the reward.

19

20 Moreover, the law entered, that the

But as for the law of Moses, that could not possibly procure this great benefit to them; for that made a little entrance,^l that is, took place

20

ⁱ As I began to observe, &c.] This 18th verse seems connected with the end of the 12th, and all the intermediate verses do undoubtedly come in as a parenthesis; and the reader, by perusing the interwoven text alone, will observe that these verses, viz. 12th, 18th, 19th, make one continued sentence. But I judged it necessary, here and elsewhere, to break the paraphrase into several sentences, lest the excessive length should have rendered the sense obscure, and the passage unwieldy and disagreeable. Many of Paul's sentences are, as they stand in the text, obscured by the length. Compare 2 Cor. xii. 14; chap. xiii.

^k Many shall be constituted righteous.] To become liable to death for the offence of another, is indeed being thereby constituted a sinner, or treated as a sinner; since death is, in its primary view, to be considered as the wages of sin, or the ani-

madversion of a righteous God upon it: but simply to be raised from the dead is not being made righteous, or treated as a righteous person; since it is a very supposable case, and will in fact be the case of millions, that a sinner may be raised in order to more condign and dreadful punishment. The whole interpretation, therefore, which Mr. Taylor has given of this text, in this view appears to me destitute of a sufficient foundation.

^l Made a little entrance.] So *παρεισθη* properly signifies, and is well rendered by the Vulgate *subintravit*, in which sense *παρεισσεύει* is used Gal. ii. 4. Thus the partial and limited entrance of the law is distinguished from that universal entrance of sin which passed on all, as Mr. Locke well observes. This I think preferable to Mr. L'Enfant's rendering it *the law intervened*, that is, between Adam and Christ.

SECT. among comparatively a very small number of offence might abound: but where sin
 XI. mankind for a few ages, *that the offence might,* abounded, grace did
 Rom. instead of being removed, *abound* much more much more abound:
 v. 20. than before; as in consequence of it many things

became offensive to God which were before indifferent, and the guilt of moral offences was aggravated by so express a declaration of the rule of duty violated by them: so that, on the whole, it seemed intended to convince and humble rather than to justify. Yet, on the whole, God hath taken an occasion to glorify the riches of his mercy by that dispensation, and *where sin has abounded* under the most aggravating circumstances, *grace hath superabounded*, so as thereby to gain a superior and more illustrious
 21 triumph: *That as sin had reigned* in the wide and universal devastation which *death* had made on those whom it had brought under that fatal sentence, *so grace might reign* to such a degree as to bestow *eternal life* and happiness, *through* the glorious and complete *righteousness^m* which we obtain *by Jesus Christ our Lord*, when we sincerely believe in him as our Saviour, and give up our souls to the authority of his equitable and auspicious government.

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 11. LET us daily remember our relation to God by Christ Jesus, and glory in this relation; saying frequently, "He is indeed
 " our Father. This God, with all his adorable, unfathomable,
 " immutable perfections, is our God. He will be our guide
 " unto death, and our portion for ever. My soul shall make
 " her boast in the Lord. What relation can be so honourable,
 " what can afford such an unfailing spring of perpetual joy?"

Let us honour him in all his dispensations, even those which may appear the most mysterious. In this number we are undoubtedly to reckon his constituting Adam the covenant-head of his posterity, and involving our life or death in him; yea, adjusting the relation so, that our spiritual state should be greatly affected by his conduct, and we should by his transgression become the heirs, not only of death but of moral pollution, and ultimately, by virtue of our descent from him, be shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin.

^m Grace might reign to eternal life through righteousness, &c.] This trajectory the sense absolutely requires.

It is a consideration which must carry awe and solemnity, grief and lamentation, throughout all ages, *that by one man sin entered into the world, and death made such a progress by the entrance of sin, as to pass upon all men in consequence of that act.* O God, how terrible are thy judgments! and yet how rich thy compassion in appointing the second Adam to repair the ruin and desolations of the first! Yea, more than to repair them; to deliver us from all our most aggravated transgressions, if we believe in him, and receive the gift of righteousness! to cause us to reign in life by him! to bring us to a more exalted and secure happiness than Adam himself enjoyed in the day in which he was created, or than Eden, the garden of God, could afford!

Let us adore these superaboundings of divine grace, and its reign unto eternal life. And let all our knowledge of the law of God, our distress under a sense of having broken it, and being thereby exposed to its condemning sentence, be considered as illustrating the riches of that grace whereby we are saved, and so animate us to returns of the humblest gratitude and a persevering obedience. Amen.

SECT. XII.

The apostle shows that the gospel, far from dissolving our obligations to practical holiness, does strongly increase them; which is a consideration tending highly to recommend it to the esteem and acceptance of all. Rom. vi. 1—14.

ROMANS VI. 1.

ROMANS VI. 1.

WHAT shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

THUS we have asserted the doctrine of justification by faith, or in other words, of salvation by grace. And now let us consider how it is to be improved. *What shall we say, then, concerning the practical inferences to be drawn from it?*^a Shall we say, *Let us continue in the habitual practice of sin, that grace may abound so much the more in pardoning and saving us?* *God forbid* that such an unworthy thought should ever arise in our hearts! We have disclaimed the consequence above, (chap. iii. 7, 8.) and we most solemnly disclaim it again. We

SECT. XII.

Rom. vi. 1.

² God forbid! how shall we, that are

² *God forbid* that such an unworthy thought should ever arise in our hearts! We have disclaimed the consequence above, (chap. iii. 7, 8.) and we most solemnly disclaim it again. We

^a *What shall we say then? &c.]* The apostle here sets himself more fully to clear and vindicate the doctrine he taught from the consequence suggested

before, chap. iii. 7, 8. He had then only in strong terms denied and renounced it, but here removes the very foundation of it.

SECT. *who are dead to sin,*^b we who, by our profession, dead to sin, live any longer therein?
XII. are under such sacred engagements to mortify

Rom.
vi. 2.

it with the greatest care, *how shall we yet live in it?* Surely it were the grossest contradiction that can be imagined. On the contrary, it is apparent that nothing has so great a tendency to animate us to avoid sin, and to enable us to conquer it, as this doctrine of gospel-grace.

3 *What, Sirs! know ye not, and is it possible that any of you should be ignorant of this great and obvious truth, that as many of us as have been baptized into Jesus Christ,*^c that is, into the profession of the Christian faith, which is the case of us all, *have been baptized into his death,* and engaged to conform to the great purposes of it, which we know were to abolish sin?

4 (1 Pet. iv. 1, 2; 1 John iii. 5.) *Therefore, as this is the known obligation of this solemn initiatory ordinance, it may be said that we are buried with him in that baptism*^d which we received as bringing us into a kind of fellowship in [his] death; most evidently for this purpose, *that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father,* and the operation of his illustrious though mysterious power, *so we also should continue, during the remainder of our days, to walk in newness of life,* maintaining a course of conduct and actions entirely different from the

5 former. *For surely these two must go together; and we may conclude that if we are thus made to grow together in the likeness of his death,*^e

3 Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall

^b *Dead to sin.*] Elsner shows how frequently moral writers among the heathens speak of wise and good men as dead to sensualities and animal pleasures. Elsner, *Observ.* Vol. II. p. 28.

^c *Baptized into Jesus Christ.*] As the church at Rome seems to have been planted about the year 43, and this epistle was written in the year 58, that is, 15 years after, and yet the apostle speaks of the converted Romans in general as baptized, it must be supposed, as Dr. Gale well argues, that baptism was administered to those whose parents had been Christians at the time of their birth. Compare Col. ii. 12. See Gale's *Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 202, 203.

^d *Buried with him in baptism.*] It seems the part of candour to confess that here

is an allusion to the manner of baptising by immersion, as most usual in these early times; but that will not prove this particular circumstance to be essential to the ordinance: and in whatever manner it was administered, if it were intended as a declaration of faith in the death and resurrection of Christ, as it is well known Christ died for sin, it would infer an obligation to die to it and rise again to a holy life, which is the main point the apostle labours.

^e *Made to grow together.*] Dr. Wells observes that this is the most exact import of *συμφύτοι*, and that it does not signify merely being *planted together*.—As there is something harsh in the construction of *εἰ* and *ἀλλὰ* here, Beza would for *ἀλλὰ* read *ἀμέα*; but Raphelius in his

be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin:

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

so also shall we be united [in the likeness] of [his] resurrection, and shall rise up to a life spiritually new, as he rose to immortal life and vigour;

As we know this, that our old man, that is, the whole system of our former inclinations and dispositions, which did by a fatal contagion spread themselves over the whole man, and were incorporated with it, hath now, as it were, been crucified together [with Christ,] the remembrance and consideration of his cross co-operating in the most powerful manner with all the other motives which the gospel suggests to destroy the former habits of sin, and to inspire us with an aversion to it; that so the body of sin, of which this old man did as it were consist, might be enervated, deposed, and destroyed; that we might no longer be in bondage to sin, as we were before we were so happy as to know the gospel and the efficacy of this great doctrine of a crucified Saviour: For he that is thus dead with Christ is set at liberty from sin, sin being crucified to him and he to sin, on the principles mentioned before; just as the death either of the master or the slave, and much more evidently of both, dissolves the relation and destroys the oppressive power which might before be exercised.

And let me farther remind you, that as we are Christians, we believe that if we be thus dead with Christ, we shall also live together with him. We expect ere long to share with Christ in the complete holiness and glory of the heavenly

SECT.
XII.

Rom.
vi. 6.

notes from Herodotus has produced many parallel constructions in which *αλλα* signifies so. As for the future *εσομεθα*, he shows that it signifies a necessary consequence from the premises.

[*Enervated, deposed, and destroyed: καλεσθη.*] We render it *destroyed*, not only tormented or enfeebled, but utterly slain; and so the same word is rendered 2 Thess. ii. 18, and 1 Cor. xv. 26, perhaps not with exact propriety; Heb. ii. 14. The utter destruction of the body of sin in us is certainly intended in the gospel, but the particular import of this word is to make void, debilitate, enervate, disannul, abolish, or depose. Compare Rom. iii. 31; chap. iv. 14; 1 Cor. ii. 6; chap. xiii. 8; chap. xv. 24; Eph. ii. 15; 2 Tim. i.

10. I have joined the significations in the paraphrase, and given the version which appears to me most exactly to answer the import of the original. The body of sin in believers is indeed an enfeebled, conquered, and deposed tyrant, and the stroke of death finishes its destruction.

[*Set at liberty.*] *Δεδικαιωται* signifies to be justified or vindicated, and here it seems to import being delivered from future claims of subjection. But this sense is so uncommon, that I am much in doubt whether it might not be rendered justified here, to intimate that a sense of justification by the cross of Christ is the great means of our delivery from the bondage of sin, as it animates and excites us to shake off its yoke.

SECT. world; and you will easily understand, and I

XII. hope easily feel, the obligation which that hope lays upon us, not only to cease from sin, but through his grace to cultivate universal holiness.

Rom.
vi. 8.

9 We should ever be under the influence of these views, even to the very end of our course, *as we know that Christ being raised from the dead, dies no more; death no more reigneth over him,* as it seemed for a while to do. And thus your immortal life and happiness, if you pursue it according to his direction and intention, is se-

10 cure: *For whereas he died, he died once for all,* as a sacrifice for sin, to atone the injured justice of God and repair the honours of his violated law: *And as he liveth, he liveth to God for ever;* his immortal life is entirely appropriated and devoted to his service, wherein we ought to make it our constant care to imitate his exam-

11 ple. Suffer therefore the word of exhortation grounded on this important principle, and *so do ye also reckon yourselves to be once for all dead unto sin,* never to return under its power any more; and being thus made *alive,* let it be your care, in imitation of your Divine Master, to devote your recovered life to the honour and service of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, whose pattern and authority in such a relation concur

12 to demand it of us. *Therefore let not sin reign* as an uncontrollable sovereign, now you have another Lord so much greater and better; let not the irregular inclinations of your minds, when they may move in *your mortal bodies,* give law to them. The early conquest of sin over the human nature hath, alas! reduced them to the sad state of mortality; but do not go on, after such a deliverance hath been wrought out for you, in a servile and wretched manner to *obey it in its licentious desires and demands:*

13 *Neither present your members to sin [as] weapons and instruments of unrighteousness; but with all devout affection and holy zeal present yourselves to God as those who, by his rich mercy and almighty power, are now made spiritually alive,* and called out from that wretched state in which you lay as among the dead. Conscious therefore of the obligations you lie under to him who hath raised you to this new and glorious

9 Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof:

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and

your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

life, present all *your members* and powers to God as weapons and instruments of righteousness to fight his battles,^h and to be for ever devoted to his service. Do it boldly and resolutely, and not as if you feared that your former master should recover his power and prove a severer tyrant, after you had thus attempted to revolt; for you may on the contrary be assured that *sin shall not have any more dominion over you, as you are not under the law,*ⁱ a dispensation of bondage and terror, but under grace, under the merciful dispensation of the gospel, which affords such consolations, and inspires such hopes, as may animate the soul to a much more successful combat with sin than the law could do, and gives a much nobler assurance of a complete victory over it. Romans viii. 1—4.

SECT.

XII.

Rom.
vi. 14.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET our hearts rise with indignation at the thoughts of so ungrateful an abuse of the Divine goodness, as to take encouragement from the aboundings of grace to continue in sin. Are not we likewise by profession dead to it? are not we bound by our baptismal vow, as the ancient Christians to whom Paul addresses himself were? Or has the use and purpose of baptism been since altered, so as to allow a covenant with sin, an agreement with hell, even to those who are listed under the banners of a Saviour? Is Christ then become the minister of sin, or shall his death lose all its effect, while we profess to honour the solemn memorials of it? Recollecting that we *are not under the law, but*¹⁴ *under grace*, let so glorious a dispensation animate us to resolutions proportionably heroic; and may the remembrance of the death of the Son of God, in concurrence with that of his resurrection, engage us to walk in newness of life, if we desire another day to be planted into the likeness of that resurrection, and to rise victorious and triumphant from the grave!

Ver. 1.

No more let us return under the power of that spiritual death from which Christ, at the price of his own life, hath delivered us; but let us live to God, solemnly presenting our bodies and our souls to him, to be honoured as the instruments of his ser-

^h *Instruments* to fight his battles.] The word *ὄπλα* properly signifies *weapons*, and in this sense it has a beautiful propriety.

ⁱ *Under the law.*] The Mosaic law may be particularly intended; and the propriety of what is here said, when considered in reference to that, is illustrated by that excellent discourse of the apos-

tle in the viith chapter: but it may very well imply that we are not so under any law as to be utterly condemned for want of a legal, that is, a perfect righteousness; an apprehension of which would tend utterly to discourage the soul in all its attempts to free itself for the future from the dominion of sin.

SECT. XII. vice, and employing each of our members according to its proper office for his glory. *We are alive from the dead, we are raised by a divine power : Let us therefore daily set ourselves as in the presence of the God of our renewed lives, and account that time lost in which we are not acting for him. Without this, in vain do we know the vital truths of his gospel, in vain do we plead for them, and amuse ourselves with a sanguine hope of bearing the image of Christ in glory, if all these powerful arguments cannot now engage us to bear it in holiness.*

SECT. XIII.

The apostle takes this opportunity of urging on the Christians at Rome that holiness to which they were so strongly obliged by the gospel. Rom. vi. 15, to the end.

ROM. VI. 15.

SECT. XIII.

Rom. vi. 15.

I HAVE just been reminding you Christians of your great privileges; that you are now under a dispensation of the most glorious grace in the gospel, and not under the restraints nor under the terrors of the Mosaic law. And *what then* are we to infer? *Shall we* take encouragement from thence to offend him to whose distinguishing goodness we are so much obliged, and *sin* securely and presumptuously *because we are not under the law, but under the grace of the gospel? God forbid!* The inference would be so odious and so dangerous, that though I disclaimed it before, (ver. 1.) I cannot too frequently guard you against it. And should you allow yourselves to argue thus, it would sufficiently prove that you do not belong to Christ, however you may glory in a pretended external relation. *Know ye not that to whomsoever ye present yourselves [as] servants, actually to obey his commands, his servants you are? Not his whose name ye may bear without practically acknowledging his authority, but his whom you in fact obey. Least of all can you divide yourselves between two contrary masters, but must either be entirely the servants of sin, which you know by a certain consequence leads to eternal death, or entirely the servants of God, by a course of resolute and persevering*

ROMANS VI. 15.

WHAT then? shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obe-

dience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

obedience, which, notwithstanding your former failures, will securely lead to righteousness and life. *But thanks be to God, that whereas you were once the servants of sin, this is to be spoken of as a bondage past and gone; and that ye have now obeyed, not in profession alone, but from the heart, the model of doctrine into which ye were delivered as into a mould;*^a that your whole temper and life might be formed and fashioned into an amiable and glorious correspondence with it. *And therefore being thus made free from sin, ye are become the servants of righteousness, and are at once enabled and obliged to lead a life of true piety and exemplary goodness.*

I speak as a man, and upon the common principle of human equity and justice, as well as with a reference to civil customs, with which you Romans are so familiarly acquainted. And I reason thus with you because of the weakness of your flesh, because of those infirmities and temptations arising from it, against which I would endeavour to fortify you by every consideration that may render you victorious over it. As ye have^b *in time past, while ignorant of the gospel, and many of you the slaves of heathen vice and idolatry, presented your members servants to uncleanness, and to other kinds of iniquity into which that debauchery too naturally leads; so let it now be your care to present your members servants of righteousness, in order to the practice of universal holiness.*

And it is very fit that this should be your entire employment; *for when ye were servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness, you never did any single action that was truly good and on the whole acceptable to God, because none*

SECT.
XIII.
Rom.
vi. 17.

^a *Model of doctrine, &c.*: *ως δὲ παρεδόθητε τυπὸν διδασχης.* That *τυπος* may properly be rendered *model*, see note^f on Rom. v. 14, and add to the instances there given, Elsner's note on this place; and see Dr. Sykes of Christianity, p. 178.—Mr. Locke thinks it is an elegant metaphor to represent the delivery of a servant over from one master to another, and that the gospel, expressed by the form of *sound words*, is the master succeeding to the law. But it seems more probable that it may allude to melted

metal being formed by the mould into which it is poured; and it finely expresses that pliancy of temper with respect to the gospel, which constitutes so lovely a part of the true Christian's character.

^b *As ye have.*] It is in the original *ωσπερ γαρ*: but *γαρ* is here most evidently an expletive, as in Greek it often is. It is of some moment to observe this; and I think it had been better if our translators had more frequently attended to it.

SECT. was performed from such principles as could

XIII. entitle it to his complete approbation. Now

Rom.
vi. 20.

surely you should be as ready to obey righteousness as you have been to obey sin, and show as much zeal in the best as you have done in

21 the worst of causes. To engage you *therefore* to this, consider *what fruit* or advantage *did you then derive from those things* of the very remembrance of *which you are now heartily ashamed*, which you would not be if you had indeed obtained any solid advantage by them; whereas this is far from being the case, *for the*

22 *certain end of those things [is] death. But remember you have now what is most honourable and most advantageous in your view; for being set free from sin, and engaged to God as his servants and property, you have your fruit unto holiness, in which you find a present and most solid advantage, and the end you have in view is nothing less than eternal life: such is the infinite difference, and so advantageous the*

23 *exchange you have made. For eternal death [is] the proper wages and desert of sin, and is all the gain which its wretched slave will have to show from the hand of his tyrannical master in the great day of future account; but eternal life [is] not, as in the former instance, the justly-deserved retribution of the action, but the gift of a gracious and bountiful God in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom we are to ascribe it that any of our services are accepted, and much more that they are recompensed with a munificence worthy the Lord of all.*

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 15. BEING set at liberty from the condemning sentence of God's law, let us charge our souls, by all the ties of gratitude, that we do not turn his grace into wantonness, or deceive ourselves with vain words in a matter of infinite importance. We cannot

^c *Eternal death*—in the great day of future account.] I see no imaginable reason to believe, as some late writers have intimated in their paraphrase on this verse, that *death* here signifies *being cast out of existence*. See chap. ii. 12, noteⁱ. If this could be inferred with relation to wicked heathens from the places before us, it might also, contrary to

the opinion of these authors, be concluded to be the case of wicked Christians, from chap. viii. 13. The truth is, that to die signifies to fall under the capital sentence of the Divine law; and it is well known that being cast into the ever-burning lake is in this view called death, Rev. xxi. 8.

be at the same time the servants of God and the servants of sin; SECT. XIII.
 and certainly our understandings must be darkened to infatuation if we can long doubt whose service we should prefer. *The work of righteousness is peace, the effect of it quietness and assurance for ever,* (Isa. xxxii. 17;) but death is the wages of sin, and Ver. 17.
 it shall be repaid to all that go on in it. And O what and how terrible a death, *to be cast into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death!* How merciful are all the repeated admonitions which warn us to flee from it! Let us all judge that it is already too long that we have yielded 18, 19
 ourselves the servants of sin; too long that our members, made for the service of their Creator, devoted perhaps with great solemnity to our Redeemer, have been abused and prostituted as the instruments of unrighteousness. Surely it is too much 22
 time that we have already spent, too much vigour that we have already exerted, in so base a servitude. For the future let us act as those who are made free from sin.

And to animate us to it, let us often reflect how unfruitful 21
 the works of darkness have been found, in what shame they have already ended, in what shame and everlasting contempt they must end if they be finally pursued: And let us daily direct our eye to that everlasting life that crowns the happy prospect of those who have their fruit unto holiness. Blessed effect of 22
 serving God now, to serve and enjoy him for ever! to enjoy, through eternal ages, the pleasures of a nature thoroughly sanctified, and the sight and favour of that God who is the original source and pattern of sanctification! It is the glorious mark at which we are aiming: Let us pursue it steadily and resolutely; yet always remembering that it is the gift of God, and never 23
 presuming to think of so glorious a remuneration as the wages of any duty we can perform. Alas! the imperfections of our best services daily forfeit the blessings of time: how impossible then is it that the sincerity of them, amidst so many frailties and defects, should purchase the glories of eternity!

SECT. XIV.

The apostle enters upon his design of taking off the believing Jews from their fond attachment to the Mosaic law, now they were, in a spiritual sense, married to Christ by the gospel. Rom. vii. 1—6.

ROMANS VII. 1.

ROMANS VII. 1.

K NOW ye not, brethren, **I** HAVE been endeavouring to direct your regards to the gospel, and to Christ as there exhibited, in order to your justification and salvation. Now you may perhaps be ready to ob- SECT. XIV.
Rom. vii. 1.

SECT. ject, that you, who are Jews, will certainly be
 XIV. out of the way of obtaining those privileges if
 you should neglect the Mosaic law, the divine
 Rom. authority of which none can reasonably ques-
 vii. 1. tion. *But know ye not, brethren, (for I am now speaking to those that are supposed to be familiarly acquainted with the contents of that law for which they are so zealous;) that, on the principles which the law itself lays down, it ruleth over a man only so long as it liveth;^a its dominion over particular persons can, at the utmost, last no longer than till it is itself abrogated; for that is as it were its death, since the Divine authority going along with it was the very life and soul of the law. Suppose that to cease, and the letter of the precept is but a dead corpse, and, with respect to its obligation, as if it had never been. Just as it is, according to the law itself, with respect to the power of an husband over his wife, which death entirely dissolves: for the married woman is indeed bound and confined by the law to her husband while he is alive; but if [her] husband be dead, she is set at liberty from any farther subjection to the law of [her] husband, that is, from that law which had given him a peculiar property in her and authority over her. Therefore, if she become the property of another man^b whilst her husband liveth, she carries the infamous name of an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is set at liberty from the obligation of the law*

thren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

2 For the woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

3 So then, if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that

^a So long as it liveth; ἐς ὅσον χρόνον ζῇ.] It would be contrary to the apostle's design to suppose the sense of this to be, as our translation renders it, *as long as he*, that is, the man in question, *liveth*: for he professedly endeavours to prove that they had outlived their obligations to the law. Elsner would connect ἀνθρώπου with νόμος, and render it, *the law and authority of the husband continues in force as long as he, that is, the husband, liveth*; and produces authorities to prove that κυριεύω is often applied to the obliging force of a law, or that matrimonial customs are sometimes called laws. (Observ. Vol. II. p. 31.) But this, if it avoid, as he pleads, one tautology, certainly occasions another; for the 2d verse plainly expresses this sense; and it would require a transposition not to be allowed

without more apparent reason. Our rendering is more natural, and suits the connection with the following verses, in which the law is represented as the first husband, whose decease leaves them free to be married to Christ.

^b If she become the property of another (εἰς γυνήται ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ) while her husband liveth, &c.] The apostle here speaks in the general, not entering exactly into every excepted case that might be imagined: to infer therefore, contrary to our Lord's express decision elsewhere, that adultery is not a sufficient foundation for divorce, seems very unreasonable; though Bishop Burnet assures us that great stress was once laid on the argument. Burn. Hist. of the Reformation, Vol. II. p. 57.

law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death:

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

that bound her to him, so as to be no more subject to the shame and punishment of an adulteress, though she become the property of another man: for death having interposed between them, hath dissolved the former relation; he is dead to her and she to him. Thus ye also, my dear brethren, are in effect dead to the Mosaic law by the body of Christ,^c his death and sufferings having now accomplished its design and abrogated its authority; and this with a gracious intent that ye might be, as it were, married to another, [that is,] to him who was in so glorious and triumphant a manner raised from the dead, no more to die; that in consequence of this new marriage we might bring forth fruit unto God in all the ways of holy obedience.

And ye should do it with the greatest zeal; 5 for when we were in the flesh, that is, under the comparatively carnal dispensation of Moses, a variety of sinful passions, accidentally occasioned and irritated by the law, were active in our members, so as to produce visible sinful actions, and in them to bring forth a very different fruit from that which I have just been mentioning; even, as I observed before, (chap. vi. 21, 23,) such fruit as would expose you to eternal death if God were to be strict to mark your offences, and if his mercy did not interpose to break the fatal connection; a circumstance which it is of the utmost importance seriously to reflect upon. But now we are set at liberty from our obligation to the law, that obligation in which we were held being in effect dead or abrogated, (as I told you above, ver. 1—4,) so as that now you are, in a more liberal manner and from nobler principles, to serve God as your Master and Father in Christ, in the newness of the spirit, and not [in] the oldness of the letter:^d that is, you are to live as those that are renewed by the Holy Spirit of God, in a rich abundance poured out upon you under this new and better dispensation, whereby

SECT.
XIV.
Rom.
vii. 3.

^c By the body of Christ.] He is to be considered here as testifying by the authority of a Christian apostle, that this was the design of Christ's death; so that all he does in his argument here, is to show that allowing it to have been thus, (as Jewish believers all did,) their free-

dom from the Mosaic law followed on the very principles of that law itself.

^d Newness of the spirit, not [in] the oldness of the letter.] This is the literal version, but new spirit and old letter are tantamount expressions, and are more agreeable to the turn of our language.

SECT. you are brought to observe the spiritual mean-
 XIV. ing and design of the law, being no longer
 — bound by those literal and ceremonial precepts
 Rom. which were indeed obligatory long since, but
 vii. 6. now begin to be antiquated and out of date.
 (Heb. viii. 13.)

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 4. GOD hath conferred upon all Christians this singular honour, that the whole body of them should be represented as espoused to Christ. Let us always remember how we are engaged by that sacred relation to *bring forth fruit unto God*. And may the remembrance of the resurrection of Christ put continual vigour into our obedience, while we regard him as the ever-living Lord, to whom our obligations are indissoluble and everlasting!

Too much have sinful passions reigned in our flesh during our unconverted state: In too many instances have they wrought effectually to *bring forth fruit unto death*. And we owe it to the wonderful mercy and forbearance of God, that death, eternal death, hath not long since been the consequence.

6 Being freed from the yoke of the ceremonial law, being freed also from the condemning sentence of that moral law under the obligations of which, by the constitution of our intelligent and rational nature, we are all born, let us thankfully acknowledge the favour, and charge it upon our grateful hearts that we serve God in newness of spirit and of life. To engage us to this, may we experience more abundantly the renewings of the Holy Ghost, and the actions of our lives will be easily and delightfully reduced to the obedience of those precepts which his omnipotent and gracious hand hath inscribed on our hearts.

SECT. XV.

To wean the believing Jews from their undue attachment to the law of Moses, the apostle represents at large how comparatively ineffectual its motives were to produce that holiness which, by a lively faith in the gospel, we may so happily obtain. Rom. vii. 7, to the end; viii. 1—4.

ROMANS VII. 7.

SECT. I HAVE been observing above, to those of my
 XV. Christian brethren who were educated in the
 — Jewish religion, that irregular passions, while
 Rom. we were under the law of Moses, and were ac-
 vii. 7. quainted with no superior dispensation, did in
 some instances, by means of the law, operate so
 as to bring forth fruit unto death. And it is necessary that I should not only farther illustrate

ROMANS VII. 7.
 WHAT shall we say

then? Is the law sin? God forbid! Nay, I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

that important remark, but expressly caution against any mistake with relation to it. *What shall we say then, or what do we intend by that assertion? [that] the law itself [is] sin, that there is any moral evil in it, or that it is intended by God, or adapted in its own nature, to lead men into sin? God forbid! We revere the high authority by which it was given too humbly to insinuate any thing of that kind. And indeed there are many particulars in which I should not have known sin but by the law.^a I should not, in a mere state of nature, have apprehended the evil of them; which I now learn from finding them so expressly prohibited. I had not, for instance, known the sinfulness of lust or irregular desires, unless the law had said, "Thou shalt not covet;^b" from whence it was easy to infer that this law takes cognizance of the heart as well as of external actions. But as soon as I had understanding enough to perceive that the law forbade the indulgence of irregular desires, I found that I had in fact broken it, and thereby incurred the penalty, without any hope of help and deliverance from the law. And this, while I looked no farther, naturally tended to throw my mind into a state of dejection and despair. So that I may say that sin, taking occasion from the awful sanction of the commandment,^c the wrath and ruin which it denounced, brought me into so sad a situation of mind, and left me so little strength and spirit to resist*

SECT.

XV.

Rom.
vii. 7.

⁸ But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought

^a *I should not have known sin, &c.*] The apostle here, by a very dexterous turn, changes the person, and speaks as of himself. This he elsewhere does, (Rom. iii. 6; 1 Cor. x. 30; chap. iv. 6.) when he is only personating another character. And the character assumed here is that of a man first ignorant of the law, then under it, and sincerely desiring to please God, but finding, to his sorrow, the weakness of the motives it suggested, and the sad discouragement under which it left him; and last of all, with transport discovering the gospel, and gaining pardon and strength, peace and joy, by it. But to suppose he speaks all these things of himself, as the confirmed Christian that he really was when he wrote this epistle, is not only foreign, but contrary to the

whole scope of his discourse, as well as to what is expressly asserted chap. viii. 2.

^b *Thou shalt not covet.*] This, by the way, proves that Paul thought the covetousness forbidden in the tenth commandment related to the heart, and not merely, as some have represented it, to any overt act, to an attempt to take away what belongs to another. And this might be a hint to all thinking men, that the secret powers of their souls were under a divine inspection, and that much guilt might be contracted which did not appear to any human eye.

^c *Sin taking occasion from the commandment.*] Most commentators have explained this as signifying that sin was quickened by the prohibition, the inclination of human nature in general being like that

SECT. future temptation, when I seemed already un- in me all manner of
 xv. done, that it might in a manner be said to have concupiscence: For
 Rom. wrought powerfully in me all manner of con- without the law sin
 vii. 8. cupiscence;^d such advantage did sin gain against was dead.
 me. And I mention this as the effect of my
 becoming acquainted with the law, *because* while
 I was ignorant of the sentence, and considered
 myself as *without the law* of God, *sin [was]*
dead; I was no more aware of any danger from
 it, or any power it had to hurt me, than if it
 9 had been a dead enemy. *For I once was*, as it 9 For I was alive
 were, *alive without the law*; ^e considering myself as without the law once:
 a man acquainted with it, I may say I was com- but when the com-
 paratively cheerful and happy: *but when the mandment came, sin*
commandment came, and I became acquainted revived, and I died.
 with it, in its wide extent, unspotted purity, and
 awful sanctions, then *sin immediately came to*
life again; it sprung up against me as a living
 enemy armed with instruments of destruction;
 and I, as incapable of resisting it, fell down
 and died, finding myself unable to resist my
 10 miserable doom. *And thus the commandment* 10 And the com-
which [was] in its original constitution [in- mandment which was
tended] for life,^f and calculated so to regulate ordained to life, I
 men's temper and conduct, as, if perfectly
 obeyed, to give them a legal claim to life
 and happiness, was quite changed in this
 respect: For I having thus broken it, and
 by such breach brought its condemning sen-

of a froward child, who will do a thing because it was forbidden, and perhaps is, as it were, reminded of an evil, on hearing it mentioned in a prohibition. But, not to examine how far this is a universal case, it must surely be acknowledged that all lust does not arise from hence, much being previous to any possible knowledge of God's law, whether revealed or natural. I therefore incline to the interpretation which Mr. Dunlop has given in his excellent sermon on this passage, the tenour of whose thoughts I have followed in the whole of my paraphrase upon it, begging leave to refer my reader to his discourse for the reasons that have determined me to it. Compare Jer. ii. 25. See Dunl. Sermon. Vol. II. p. 46, 47.

^d *Wrought in me.*] The word *κατεργάζομαι* in many places signifies to operate in a powerful and efficacious manner, (compare 2 Cor. iv. 17; chap. v. 5;

chap. vii. 11; chap. xii. 12.) and may well here signify a *strong irritation* of what might, without it, have been in some degree natural.

^e *I was once alive without the law.*] The apostle cannot, as Mr. Locke supposes here, speak in the person of the whole Jewish people, and in this clause refer to the time between Abraham and Moses; for, not to examine how far this description would suit them then, we must on that principle of interpretation suppose they are all represented, in the close of the chapter, as *believing in Christ*; which, alas! we know to have been very far from being their case.

^f *Intended for life.*] The law may be said to have been *intended for life*, though by sin made the occasion of death; as medicines which, not being rightly applied, prove fatal, may nevertheless be said to have been *intended for cure*.

found to be unto death. tence upon me, really found it [to be] unto death. I found it attended with deadly consequences, both as it consigned me over to destruction for past sin, and occasionally, though not intentionally, proved productive of new guilt and misery. For sin, as I before said, ¹¹ taking occasion by the terror and curse of the violated commandment, and representing the great Lawgiver as now become my irreconcilable enemy, deceived me into a persuasion that I could be no worse than I was, and thereby it slew me; it multiplied my mortal wounds, and rendered my case still more desperate.

SECT. XV.
Rom. vii. 10.

11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

So that you see, upon the whole, the law in the general [is] acknowledged to be holy, and the particular commandment in question is acknowledged to be agreeable to the holy nature of God, just in reference to the reason of things, and, on the whole, in its consequences good, and subservient to men's happiness, if they continue in a state of rectitude. Was then that which

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid! But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good: that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

was good in itself made death to me? Shall I charge my ruin on this holy and good law of God? By no means. God forbid I should ever utter any thing like that! But I must rather charge it upon sin, which by means of so holy an instrument undid me. I say it again, Sin was made death to me, so that it appeared to be sin indeed,^g (that odious dreadful thing of which nothing can be said worse than it is itself,) as working death in me by the occasion of that which is so eminently good; that so sin might, by the commandment thus perverted, appear exceeding sinful, and stand forth in all its native and detestable colours, capable of turning the law itself into a means of producing the guilt it so solemnly forbade, and the ruin it was intended to prevent.

14 For we know that the law is spirit-

It is on this therefore that I lay all the blame; 14 for we well know that the law is spiritual, and, as it extends to the spirit, was intended to purify and exalt it, and to assert its superiority over the meaner part of our nature. But, alas!

^g So that it appeared: *ὡς φάνη.* Elsner contends that *φάνη* is an expletive here; but I choose not to allow any word in scripture to be an expletive that may fairly and naturally be expounded into any significant sense; as it is plain this may here be. See Elsner, *Observ.* Vol. II. p. 37.

SECT. may the man I have been describing and representing above be ready to say, *I am in a great measure carnal, and in so many instances sub-*

Rom.
vii. 14.

dued by the remaining infirmities of my nature, that I am ready passionately to cry out, I am even sold under sin!^b which often rises, with an almost irresistible strength, to assume a tyrannical dominion over me, as if I were its slave and property. For that which I actually do, I allow or approve notⁱ in many instances; for too often, through the strength of passion and surprise of temptation, I practise not that which in the general tenour of my mind I habitually will; but the things which I even hate, which I think of with the greatest abhorrence, those things in many respects I am so unhappy to do; which indeed makes me a burden to myself. Now if I do that which I would not, in willing not to do it I do so far, though to my own condemnation, consent to the law, and bear my testimony to it that [it is] good, and do indeed desire to fulfil it; though, when a pressing hour of temptation comes, contrary to my resolution, I fail in ob-

17 serving it. But now, in these circumstances, it is no more I myself that can properly be said to do it, but rather sin, which dwelleth in me, and which makes, as it were, another person, having desires and motions and interests entirely contrary to those of the renewed part

18 within, which I would call my better self. For I well know that in me, that is, in my flesh, the corrupt and degenerate self, nothing that is good dwelleth. I find my animal powers sadly debased and enslaved: for to will is indeed present with me; I form many good purposes and

ual: but I am carnal, sold under sin-

15 For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with

^b Sold under sin.] This is often urged as an argument that the apostle here speaks in the person of a wicked man, and is represented as a phrase parallel to 1 Kings xxi. 20; 2 Kings xvii. 17; where some of the worst of men are described as having sold themselves to do evil. But the diversity of the expression is very obvious; and yet had this person been represented as lamenting that he had sold himself to sin, it might have been understood as the language of penitent remorse for past guilt, and so very consistent with a good man's character. And

the many instances in which very excellent persons in the distress of their hearts for the remainder of imperfection in their character, adopt this very phrase, plainly show with what propriety Paul might put it into the mouth of one whom he did not consider as an abandoned sinner, and destitute of every principle of real piety.

ⁱ I approve not.] Gataker (de Styl. Nov. Testam. cap. 4; Advers. Miscell. lib. i. cap. 6.) and Raphelius (in loc.) bring apposite instances of such a use of the word *γινώσκω*.

me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see an-

resolutions; but when the time comes in which I should bring them into effect, *I find not* in my heart a sufficient [ability] strenuously to perform that which I know is good, and which I acknowledge to be most amiable and desirable.

SECT. XV.
Rom. vii. 18.

It is indeed so grievous a reflection to me, that I cannot forbear repeating it again and again; for it is really so that *I do not the good that I often will* and resolve to do; *but the evil which I will not* to do, which I form the strongest purposes against, *that I do*^k in repeated instances.

If therefore, as I said before, *I do that which I would not*, and am, as it were, overpowered in some cases and circumstances, contrary to the settled and prevailing bent and inclination of my soul, *it is no more I that do it, but sin, which, as another person, dwelleth in me*,¹ and, like an evil demon when it has taken possession of a man, uses my faculties and powers, over which it usurps an abhorred dominion, to carry on its own contrary and destructive interests.

I find then, upon the whole, a sort of constraining law, which so influences me, *that when I would do good, evil is in fact present with me*. For *with regard to the inner-man*, that is, my mind, the better and nobler powers of my intellectual nature, *I delight in the law of God*,^m I most heartily approve it, and look upon its whole system with complacency, as what I could rejoice to be conformed to in the completest

manner and highest degree. *But, alas! I see*

^k *The evil which I will not, that I do.*]

If the meaning of such expressions as these were, that, upon the whole, the person using them went on in a prevailing course of habitual wickedness, against the convictions and dictates of his own conscience, one would imagine Paul would have rebuked such a one with great severity, and answered these vain and hypocritical pleas; whereas he represents this person afterwards as with joy embracing the gospel, and so obtaining superior strength, upon the full manifestation of pardoning grace there.

¹ *Sin that dwelleth, &c.*] This seems indeed no more than a repetition of verse 17; but it is a graceful and expressive repetition, and shows how near the affair lay to the heart of the person thus com-

plaining, and in what sad and frequent successions the complaint was renewed. The beautiful passage in the 6th book of Xenophon's Cyropædia, (p. 328, edit. Hutchin. 1738, 8vo.) where Araspas complains of two souls contending within him, (a passage which it is very possible St. Paul might have read,) contains an agreeable illustration of this paragraph.

^m *I delight in the law of God after the inner-man.*] This is so sure a trace of real piety, and is represented in scripture as, in this view, so decisive, that if it be supposed a true representation of the character, we must surely allow it to have been that of a truly good man, whatever lamented imperfections might attend it. —Plato uses the phrase *ὁ ἐν λόγῳ ἀνθρώπος* for the rational part of our nature.

SECT. *another and quite opposite law of vicious and*
 XV. *irregular inclinations seated in my members,*
 Rom. which, taking its rise from a lower and meaner
 vii. 23. *principle, is continually making war against the*
better law of my mind, and too frequently cap-
tivating me to the law of sin which is, as I said,

24 *seated in my corporeal members. Wretched*
man that I am! do I often cry out, in such a
circumstance, with no better supports and incite-
ments than the law can give; who shall rescue
me, miserable captive as I am, from the body of
this death? From this continual burden which
I carry about with me, and which is cumber-
some and odious as a dead carcase tied to a
living body, to be dragged along with it where-
ever it goes.ⁿ

25 *Thus I bemoan myself when I think only of*
the Mosaic law, the discoveries it makes, the
motives it suggests, and the circumstances in
which it leaves the offender: but in the midst of
this gloomy prospect, a sight of the gospel re-
vives my heart, and I cry out as in a kind of
rapture, as soon as I turn mine eyes to it, I
thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord,^o in
whom he now reveals himself to me, and by whom
he delivereth me from this bondage and misery.
So then, whereas I myself,^p with the nobler
powers of my spirit, serve the law of God, though
in too many instances I am so oppressed with
the infirmity of my flesh, that I am subdued by
 Rom. *the law of sin, [There is] now, under the gos-*
 viii. 1. *pel dispensation, no condemnation to those in*
Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but
after the Spirit;^q that is, to those who, making a

24 O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

ROMANS VIII. 1.
 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

ⁿ Dead carcase, &c.] It is well known that some ancient writers mention this as a cruelty practised by some tyrants on miserable captives who fell into their hands; and a more forcible and expressive image of the sad case represented cannot surely enter into the mind of man.

^o I thank God, through Jesus Christ.] For *ευχαριστω τω Θεω*, some copies read *η χαρις τω Θεω*, the grace of God, which to be sure makes a noble sense; but that of the received and much more authentic copies comes very near it, and in the main coincides with it.

^p Whereas I serve, &c.—there is now no condemnation, &c.] I think there is not

in the whole New Testament a more unhappy division between two chapters than what has been made here, not only in the midst of an argument, but even of a sentence. *Δσα νν* and *αγα νν* answer so evidently to each other, that I think it plain the former should be rendered *whereas*, and then the sense appears plain and strong. I must confess this to be an uncommon use of *αγα*; but if it be, as it often is, an expletive, it will come to much the same.

^q To those in Christ Jesus who walk, &c.] It is certain that to be in Christ, though it sometimes imports a true and sanctifying faith, (2 Cor. v. 17,) at other times expresses only an external profession;

SECT.
XV.
Rom.
viii. 1.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful

profession of the Christian faith, do in the main course of their lives verify that profession, governing themselves by spiritual views and maxims, and not by carnal appetites and interests. I say it again, I thank God for this dispensation with all the powers of my soul ; for though, when considering myself as only under the law, I made such melancholy complaints, *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*, that glorious gospel which is attended with an abundant effusion of the vivifying and animating Spirit, *has* now recovered me, mortally wounded as I seemed to have been, and *set me at liberty from that lamented captivity to the law of sin and death.*^r For God hath now, by a gracious and most wonderful appearance, [*done*] *what it was impossible for the law to do, in that it was comparatively weak through the great infirmity of the flesh,*^s against which in so corrupt a state it could not, merely by its own principles, sufficiently provide :^t [*he,*] I say, the great Father of mercies, *by sending his own well-beloved Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh,*^u

(John xv. 2.) and as the article τοῦ is not repeated, I think it is plain the latter clause limits the former, which justifies our rendering. Compare Psal. lxxiii. 1.

^r *Hath set me at liberty, &c.*] It is to be observed that the same person who spoke before is here represented as continuing the discourse, and speaks of himself as delivered from the bondage so bitterly complained of.

^s *What it was impossible for the law to do, &c.*] It is indeed true in the general, as the pious Professor Zimmerman justly observes, (in his excellent Comment. de Emin. Cognit. Christi, p. 6, 7, and 34,) " that the strength of the law is not adequate to that of corrupt nature ; and " it is by evangelical considerations that " we are most effectually animated to " subdue sin." But that is to be considered as a consequence of what the apostle here asserts concerning the law of Moses, rather than the assertion itself. And indeed, whoever considers the awful nature and sanctions of that law, must acknowledge that it was calculated to be a much more efficacious restraint from sin than the unassisted light of nature, or than any other dispensation revealing God's law, prior to the gospel.

So that the above-mentioned consequence is very strong.

^t Merely by its own principles, sufficiently provide.] By this clause I endeavour to lay in an effectual answer to that objection which might lie against the apostle's argument and our explanation of it, from the eminent heights of goodness attained by some holy men under the law. It was not by the law, though under it, that they obtained them, but by those evangelical promises which mingled with the law, though they did not make a part of it, but sprang from the Abrahamic covenant, which, as the apostle elsewhere urges, was unrepealed by the law ; and this, which the Jews were so ready to forget, (Rom. x. 3.) is the point that he so particularly labours, both in this epistle and that to the Galatians, to inculcate.

^u *The likeness of sinful flesh.*] Those writers who imagine that our first parents were in their original state clothed with a visible lustre, which was lost by their transgression, in reference to which it is said *that they knew they were naked*, naturally explain this clause by that hypothesis.

SECT. with all those innocent infirmities which the flesh, and for sin
 XV. first apostasy of our nature brought upon hu- condemned sin in
 man flesh, and by appointing him to be a sacri- the flesh;

Rom.
 viii. 3.

sacrifice to make expiation for sin,^x who hath con-
 demned sin in the flesh, instead of being vic-
 torious, it is now brought under a sentence of
 death and destruction, which we, animated by
 these glorious motives of the gospel, are en-
 4 abled to put into execution: *That the right-
 eousness of the law*, in all its fundamental branch-
 es, may with great ardour of holy zeal be ful-
 filled in us, who answer the engagements of
 our Christian profession, and, in the tenour of
 our lives, *walk not after the flesh* to indulge its
 desires and demands, *but after the Spirit*; that
 is, who, under the influences of the Spirit of
 God, abound in the sentiments and duties of a
 truly spiritual life. You see therefore, my
 dear brethren, by the whole series of this dis-
 course, not only how safely you may cease the
 observation of the Mosaic law, but how abso-
 lutely necessary it is that you should look be-
 yond that, and consequently beyond any other
 law, natural or revealed; as ever you expect
 justification before God, and desire to be ani-
 mated to serve him in an acceptable manner.

4 That the right-
 eousness of the law
 might be fulfilled in
 us, who walk not af-
 ter the flesh but af-
 ter the Spirit.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 3. ADMIRABLE and adorable indeed were the condescensions of
 the blessed God, *in sending his own Son in the likeness of our
 sinful flesh*, stript of its original glories, that he might become an
 expiatory sacrifice for sin. Let us remember the grand purpose
 for which he did it; that he might condemn sin in our flesh, that
 he might enable us to do execution on sin as a condemned male-
 factor. In his name therefore let us pursue the victory, and re-
 jecting every overture of accommodation, with determined zeal
 do justice upon it. And may what we have been reading es-
 1 tablish our resolution of walking, *not after the flesh, but after the
 Spirit*, since we are now delivered from the curse of a broken law,
 2 and blessed with a dispensation so properly called *the law of the
 Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*: a dispensation by attending to the
 peculiarities of which we may be enabled to extend our conquests

^x For sin.] That ἀναπαύω signifies a
 sacrifice for sin, is very apparent from
 Heb. x. 6; 2 Cor. v. ult. and a great many
 other passages. The reader will observe

how very easy this little transposition,
 on account of what is so plainly a pa-
 renthesis, makes this passage, which is
 generally thought so obscure.

over sin in the most effectual manner, and to attain heights of virtue and piety to which no legal considerations and motives alone could raise us. SECT. XV.

But O, what reason of humiliation is there that we improve it no better, and that these melancholy strains should so well become us! that instead of pressing forward daily to fresh victories, and making new improvements in the divine life, we should so often complain, and have so much cause to complain, of a law in our members, not only warring against the law of our minds, but even, in many instances, bringing us into captivity to the law of sin and death: so that we Christians should cry out, like those under the Mosaic economy, *O wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us?* Let renewed views of Christ Jesus animate us to renewed vigour in this warfare; lest, when we are delivered from those servile terrors which the legal dispensation under a consciousness of guilt might have awakened, sin, no longer able to take this occasion from the law, should appear yet more exceeding sinful, by taking occasion, in another view, even from the gospel itself; which in many instances it seems to do. Ver. 23, 24

Let us remember that the law of God is holy, just, and good; delighting in it more and more after our inner-man, and taking heed that we do not deceive ourselves, by such a passage as this, into a secret but vain and fatal hope, that because we are convinced of our duty, and feel in our conscience a sense of the evil of sin, we might be said to serve the law of God, while, by abandoning ourselves to known acts of wilful transgression, we are in our flesh serving the law of sin. Habitually to allow ourselves in neglecting the good we approve and committing the evils we condemn, is the readiest way that hell itself can point out for the ruin of immortal souls; in such a case, all that we know and all that we feel concerning the obligations of duty and the excellence of holiness, aggravate rather than extenuate our failures; and though the sublime views which eminently good men under the gospel have of religion may sometimes incline them to adopt such complaints as these, in reference to the unallowed and lamented deficiencies and infirmities of a truly upright and pious life, it remains an eternal truth, which, instead of being abrogated under the New Testament, is most expressly confirmed, that he who doth righteousness is righteous, and not he that merely wishes to do it; and he who committeth sin is of the devil, even though he should speak against it like an apostle or an angel. 12 22

It is indeed impossible exactly to lay the line that separates the boundaries of the kingdom of Christ and of Satan; nor is it by any means a desirable thing that we should know the lowest state of weakness and degeneracy into which a Christian may fall while he continues in the main a Christian. We have great 21, 24

SECT. reason to doubt whether we be really Christians ourselves, if for
 XV. our own sakes we wish to know it. Our calling obliges us to
 — aspire after the most eminent attainments in religion; it obliges
 us never to rest till we find ourselves dead indeed unto sin and
 alive to God through Jesus Christ, so as to abound in all the
 vital fruits of righteousness unto his praise and glory.

SECT. XVI.

The obligations which the gospel lays upon us to a holy life are further urged, and especially those arising from the communication of the Spirit of God to believers. Rom. viii. 5—17.

ROMANS VIII. 5.

SECT.
 XVI.

Rom.
 viii. 5.

I HAVE in the preceding discourse urged it again and again, that we who profess ourselves Christians should walk, not after the flesh but after the Spirit, as ever we desire to rejoice in the glorious deliverance which the gospel brings; and with the greatest reason: for this is indeed the most important distinction in the character of men, and not any form of outward profession, or rite of worship and devotion. *They who are after the flesh*, that is, who remain under the influence of a corrupt and degenerate nature, *do mind the things of the flesh*, they prefer and pursue carnal and animal gratifications; *but they who are after the Spirit*, that is, who know any thing experimentally of that Spirit of life which I mentioned above, (ver. 2.) [*do mind*] and *pursue the things of the Spirit*; their minds are formed to a superior relish of spiritual, intellectual, and sacred pleasures, suited to that nobler and immortal part of their nature. Now as the character of these persons is so widely different, their end will be proportionably so; for *the minding of the flesh*,^a the preferring and pursuing its interests, [*is*] *death*; it is the greatest misery that can be imagined, and that which leads to everlasting death and ruin; *whereas the minding*, preferring, and pursuing the interests of the Spirit [*is*] *life and peace*; the greatest present good, and happiness which leads to life and glory everlasting. And it must

ROMANS VIII. 5.

FOR they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace:

7 Because the car-

^a Now the minding, &c.] It is plain some minded the things of the flesh, because it is death to do it. *you* must here signify *now*, for nothing could be more absurd than to say that

nal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

needs be so; *because the carnal mind*, as I have described it above, [is] in the very essence of it an absolute *enmity* to the blessed God, from whom all life and peace and happiness proceed; and consequently it brings us into a state of hostility against him. *For* it is impossible his creatures should be in a state of friendship with him unless they are in a state of willing subjection to him. Now as for the carnal mind, *it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it possibly be [so.]* For, however you may suppose any law of God to vary as to ritual and ceremonial institutions, while the nature of God continues pure and holy, as it must eternally and immutably do, he cannot but require the observation of the grand branches of moral virtue, founded on the unalterable nature and relation of things; he therefore must require us to be spiritually minded, and to prefer the interest of the soul to that of the body. *So that they who are in the flesh*, that is, under the government of a fleshly principle, whatever ceremonial precepts they may observe, or whatever orthodox principles of faith they may profess and maintain, yet *cannot possibly please God*: He must either abhor and punish them, or dishonour his own law, and contradict his pure, holy, and unchangeable nature. *But blessed be God you* Christians *are not in the flesh*, in that carnal enslaved state described above, *but in the Spirit*, and under his influence; ye, my brethren, are certainly so *if that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*; for wherever he dwells he reigns, and makes the soul thoroughly holy. *And if any man have not the Spirit of Christ* thus residing and governing in him, then, whatever he may pretend, *he is none of his*; he is not to be reckoned as a disciple of Christ, and Christ will disown him another day, as having only abused his name while he wore it.

SECT.
XVI.

Rom.
viii. 7.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin;

And by the way, to animate your hopes and all your graces, remember that *if Christ [be]* thus resident *in you* by his sanctifying Spirit, though *the body [is]* indeed dead because of the first *sin* that ever entered into the world,^b

^b *The body is dead because of sin, &c.]* but as there is no seeming opposition Some would render it *with respect to sin*; between a death with respect to sin,

SECT. which, as I showed above, has brought on a sen-
 XVI. tence of universal death; *yet the Spirit [is] life,*
 ——— and shall after death continue living, active, and
 Rom. happy, *because of that righteousness of which*
 viii. 10. our great Head, the second Adam, is the Author,

but the Spirit is life,
 because of righteous-
 ness.

11 as I have inculcated at large. *And we have this farther joyful hope, that if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus, our great Covenant-Head, from the dead, dwell in you, he that so powerfully and gloriously raised up Christ from the dead will also, in due time, quicken your mortal bodies, though corrupted and consumed in the grave, by the agency of that great and powerful Spirit which now dwelleth in you, and acts to quicken you in the divine life.*

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 *Therefore, my dear brethren, since it is certain the gratifications of the flesh can do nothing for us like that which will be done for us at the resurrection, and since all present enjoyments are mean and worthless when compared with that, here is a most substantial argument for that mortification and sanctity which the gospel requires. And it necessarily follows that we are debtors to the Spirit, which gives us such exalted hopes, and not unto the flesh, that we should live after the dictates, desires, and appetites of the flesh. For I must plainly and faithfully tell you, and must repeat and inculcate it upon you as a matter of infinite importance, that if you, though professing Christians, and some of you eminent for so high and distinguishing a profession, (compare chap. i. 8.) do live after the flesh, and mind nothing superior to its interests, ye shall assuredly die, that is, shall perish by the sentence of an holy God, no less than if you were Jews or heathens. But if you, through the influence and assistance of God's Holy Spirit, and the exercise of those graces which he by regeneration has implanted in your souls, do mortify and subdue the deeds of the body, those carnal inclinations from whence all criminal indulgencies of the body arise, ye shall live; ye shall finally obtain a state of complete felicity, in spite*

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh.

13 *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

and a life with respect to righteousness, I think the version here retained much preferable; and if this be admitted, it will certainly determine the sense of

the next verse quite contrary to Mr. Locke's unnatural gloss, which explains *quicken*ing the mortal body by sanctifying the immortal spirit.

of all that death can do to dissolve these animal bodies; not now to insist on that true rational delight which is only to be found here in such a course, and without which our abode on earth scarce deserves the name of life. Well may it be expected that in this case you shall live for ever, since hereby your adoption of God, which must entitle you to a blissful immortality, will be approved. SECT. XVI.
Rom. viii. 13.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, and humbly resign themselves to be guided whithersoever he will, by his sweet and secret influence on the soul, they are indeed the sons and daughters of God, and shall inherit eternal life with their heavenly Father; of which, indeed, if we are obedient to his holy dictates and motions, we already receive the earnest and foretastes.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

For ye who are real Christians have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear,^c ye are not come under another dispensation like that of Moses, which was much more adapted to strike the mind with terror, and often produces a servile disposition; but, on the contrary, ye have received the spirit of adoption, and confidence of children in approaching to God; by which spirit, whatever our different nations and languages may be, we can, with equal joy and freedom, present our addresses to his throne, and cry, with the overflowings of filial affection to him, and fraternal love to each other, Abba, Father.^d

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God.

For as the communication of the visible and extraordinary gifts of the Spirit both to Jews and Gentiles, witnesses that we are without distinction in this respect accepted and owned by God as his people; so also he himself, by his internal and gracious operations, beareth witness with the answer of our spirits, when seriously examined and interrogated, and gives us an inward and joyful assurance that we are the children of God, and personally interested

^c *The spirit of bondage.*] Both Mr. Locke and Mr. Pierce understand this of the fear of death under which the legal dispensation left the Jews; but I rather understand it of that comparatively servile spirit which ran through the whole Mosaic economy, and which is finely illustrated by Dr. Evans in his Sermon on this text. Evans's Christian Temp. Vol. I.

^d *Abba, Father.*] I suppose few of my readers will need to be informed that the word *abba* signifies father in the Jewish language, that is, the Syro-Chaldaic; and the insertion of it here beautifully represents the union of Jewish and Gentile believers in those devotions which were dictated by a filial spirit.

SECT. in his paternal love. *And from hence arises a* 17 *And if children,*
 XVI. *most joyful and triumphant hope; for if we* then heirs; heirs of
 Rom. *are his children, then we are undoubtedly heirs* God, and joint-heirs
 viii. 17. *of a glorious and immortal inheritance; we are* with Christ; if so be
then heirs of God, and shall for ever enjoy him that we suffer with
as our gracious Father, whose presence and him, that we may be
love is the very heaven of heaven. And we are also glorified toge-
also joint-heirs of Christ, we shall enjoy this ther.
happiness as with him in his sight, and shall be
formed to a resemblance of him as the great
foundation of that enjoyment. But then let it
ever be remembered that this is to be taken in
connection; it is provided that we are willing,
not only to deny ourselves in prohibited carnal
gratifications, and to govern our lives by his
precepts, but also to suffer with [him,] that is,
in conformity to him, if called out to it for the
honour of God and for the testimony of a
good conscience, that so we may also be glorified
together with him in that world where he now
triumphs, and where all the infamy and pain
we endure for his sake shall be amply repaid
with honours and joys everlasting.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 17. WELL may we rejoice in privileges like these; well may we
 be astonished to think that they should be bestowed on any of
 the children of men: That any of them should be *heirs of God*
and joint-heirs with Christ; the adopted children of an heavenly
 Father, and marked out by the communications of his Spirit for
 an inheritance which he hath prepared! That they should be
 fitted and enabled to approach him with that endearing com-
 15 pellation, *Abba, Father*, in their mouths! Oh that every one of us
 may know by experience, which alone can teach us, how sweet
 14 it is! and if we would obtain and secure this witness, let us see
 to it that we be obediently led by the Spirit of God; for that
 Spirit is not where he does not effectually govern; and *if any*
 9 *man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of Christ's disciples,*
 nor is he entitled to any of the privileges of his people.

Let the matter therefore be seriously examined; and let it be
 determined by inquiry, whether we do on the whole walk after
 1 the flesh or the Spirit. Let us guard more and more against that
 7 carnal mind which is enmity against God and cannot be subject
 to his law, nor leave room for us to please God while it presides
 and governs in us. Let us often reflect upon that death which
 6 would be the consequence of our living after the flesh; and never
 conceive of ourselves upon any occasion as persons who, in con-

sequence of something that has already passed, have found out a way to break the connection here established, and in the nature of things essentially established between a carnal mind and death. May our spirits be more and more enlivened by that vital union with a Redeemer which may give us a part in the merits of his righteousness, and in the life it has secured for all true believers! and may the efficacy of his Spirit to raise our souls from a death of sin to a life of holiness, be in us a blessed earnest that he will complete the work, and at length *quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit which dwelleth in us!* When flesh and sense can administer a consolation like this, let us hearken to them: in the mean time, let us remember, let us always remember, how much we are debtors to the Spirit; and let us endeavour to act according to these immense obligations.

SECT.
XVI.

SECT. XVII.

The glorious prospects which the gospel sets before us are represented and urged as a further advantage which it gives us for holiness; even that consummate glory the discovery of which the whole creation, now subject to vanity, seems to wait and call for. The apostle then mentions consolations which are derived from the assistances of the Spirit in prayer, as further illustrating his main design. Rom. viii. 18—27.

ROMANS VIII. 18.

FOR I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

ROMANS VIII. 18.

IN representing the high privileges of our adoption, I have been observing, that if, in consequence of our fidelity to our Saviour, we should suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together with him: and in this persecuted state in which, as Christians, we now are, I beseech you attentively to enter into this thought, that your hearts may be duly quickened and fortified by it. I have for my own part been obliged, amidst the peculiar hazards of my apostolic office, frequently to weigh and exactly to examine the matter; and I find, upon the most deliberate computation, that the sufferings of the present time, how extreme soever they may be, [are] not worthy [of any account] at all, not so much as worthy of a mention, when set against that great and unalterable glory that shall in due time be revealed to us, but which at present exceeds even our most elevated conceptions, and can never be fully known

SECT.
XVII.

Rom.
viii. 18.

SECT. till we see each other wear it, and by conscious-
XVII. sciousness feel it in ourselves.

- Rom. These, my dear brethren, are the views with
viii. 19. which I would animate your minds; and surely no object can give them more noble or more delightful employment. *For* methinks, when I look round upon the blasted and wretched state of this world of ours, it seems that all nature does, as it were, call aloud in pathetic language for that blessed change which the gospel was intended to introduce. *The earnest expectation of the whole creation,*^a so far as it now lies open to our view, *is waiting for the revelation of the sons of God*; for the happy time when he shall appear more openly to avow them, and that reproach and distress shall be rolled away under which they are now disguised
20 and concealed. *For the creation* soon lost its original beauty and felicity, a sad change passed on man and his abode, so that all the visible face of nature *was made subject to vanity* and wretchedness in a variety of forms; and this *not willingly*, not by the personal misbehaviour of those who are now most deeply affected with it, *but by him who subjected [it,]* that is, by Adam, when he stood at the head of our race as a public person, and by his transgression
21 brought us into so deplorable a state. Deplorable indeed! but blessed be God not entirely abandoned, since it is still *in hope* that the salvation so happily begun shall at length be much more widely extended; *that the crea-*
- 19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.
- 20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope:
- 21 Because the

^a *The earnest expectation of the creation, &c.]* This and the following verses have been generally, and not without reason, accounted as difficult as any part of this epistle. The difficulty has perhaps been something increased by rendering *κτίσις* *creation* in one clause, and *creature* in another. To explain it as chiefly referring to the brutal or inanimate creation is insufferable; since the day of the redemption of our bodies will be attended with the conflagration which will put an end to them. The interpretation, therefore, by which Dr. Whitby and Mr. Grove refer it to the Gentile world, is much preferable to this. But, on the whole, I think it gives a much sublimer and nobler sense to suppose it a bold *prosopopœia*, by which, on account of the calamity

sin brought and continued on the whole unevangelized world, (though few of its inhabitants saw so much of their misery as actually to desire the remedy,) it is represented as *looking out with eager expectation* (as the word *ἀποπαράδοια* exactly signifies,) for such a remedy and relief as the gospel brings, by the prevalence of which human nature would be rescued from vanity and corruption, and inferior creatures from tyranny and abuse. Nothing is more common than to represent a land as *mourning or rejoicing*, as *calling for rain*, &c. And if this be allowed to be the meaning of these three verses, the gradation in the 23d will be much more intelligible than on any other scheme that I know. See note ^b, next page.

creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

tion shall, at least in ages to come, be set free from the bondage of corruption by which men are now abusing themselves and the inferior creatures; and that they shall even be brought into the glorious liberty of which we Christians are possessed in consequence of our being the sons of God: as it is certain the creation would be made inconceivably happier than it is if this blessed dispensation, by which we are introduced into God's family and taught to do our utmost to diffuse good to all around us, were universally to prevail. In the mean time, 22

SECT.
XVII.
Rom.
viii. 21.

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now:

such is the state of the whole world, that it seems to call in the most importunate manner for this great interposition of divine power and mercy in its favour; yea, I may say in reference to it, *We know that the whole creation, ever since the first apostasy of our nature from God, groaneth together and travaileth together until now; it laboureth in strong pangs to bring on this important birth of sons and daughters unto the Most*

23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit,

High.^b And not only doth the whole creation 23 seem [so] to travail in pangs around us, when we survey those parts of it where the gospel is yet unknown, but even we Christians ourselves, who have received the first-fruits of the Spirit, and thereby have attained no inconsiderable degrees of liberty and deliverance, even we groan within ourselves under many remaining imperfections and burdens; while we are yet waiting with strong desire for the great event, which may, by way of eminence, be called our adoption,^c as it shall be the public declaration

^b Bring on this important birth, &c.] It is indeed true, that to be in pangs like a woman in travail sometimes only signifies being in great distress, where there is no reference to any expected birth; but it seems to me very probable that the apostle in these metaphors here alludes to what he had been saying before, ver. 14—17, 19, 21. In all which places he describes Christians as the children of God, and so here expresses the general prevalency of the gospel by the birth of many more with which nature was pregnant, and of which it longed, as it were, to be delivered: thereby beautifully representing the sad condition of those who, while they have faculties fitting them

for standing in such a relation to God as his children, are lost in darkness and vanity, while ignorant of God and the way of salvation; during which time they were even pained by the excellency of their nature, it having no suitable object to act upon. And this is the well-adjusted but generally unobserved gradation I referred to above, note^a: the world seems to wait, and call, and groan, for the spreading of the gospel; and those among whom it prevails are still travailing, as it were, with the hope and desire of a yet more exalted state after the resurrection.

^c The adoption, &c.] I entirely agree with Mr. Howe, (Works, Vol. I. p. 680,

SECT. of it, when our heavenly Father shall produce the redemption of
 XVII. us before the eyes of the whole world, habited our body.

Rom.
 viii. 23.

and adorned as becomes his children. You will easily perceive I now refer to *the redemption of our bodies*, their final deliverance from the power of the grave at the general resurrection,^d which shall introduce us to a happiness incomparably exceeding the freest and most glorious state into which the earth shall ever be brought, even by the greatest triumph and prevalency of the gospel.

24 This, I say, we are longing and breathing after; and we shall still be so while we continue here: *for we are saved by hope*; the firm belief and cheerful view of this complete salvation is our great security amidst so many evils, temptations and dangers. *But hope which is seen, that hope which relates merely to objects now visible, is not worthy the name of hope: For what a man sees, how doth he yet hope for?* the more we know of these worldly things, the less shall we amuse ourselves with any high hopes

24 For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 and expectations concerning them. *But since we hope for what we see not, for a happiness far exceeding any thing we have ever seen or can see, we patiently wait for it, and find something in the greatness of the prospect to repay the tediousness of the most afflicted circumstances, and to excite us to prepare for it by cultivating a suitable temper in all its branches.*

25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

26 Such hope doth our holy profession administer to us for our support amidst all the difficulties of our Christian course; *and we have moreover this important privilege, that the Holy Spirit of God graciously lendeth us his helping hand^e under all our burdens and infirmities*; so that we are not left to sustain them alone: which is of vast

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for

681,) that here is an allusion to the two kinds of adoption among the Romans; the first of which was private, the second public in the forum, when the adopted person was solemnly declared and avowed to be the son of the adopter. Compare Luke xx. 36.

^d Deliverance, &c.] That redemption sometimes signifies deliverance, is very certain. Compare Luke xxi. 28; Eph. i. 14; Heb. xi. 35.

^e Lendeth us his helping hand.] I know not how better to render that expressive phrase, συναρπάσσειν ἡμῖν, which literally expresses the action of one who helps another to raise or bear a burden, by taking hold of it on one side and lifting it or bearing it with him; and so it seems to intimate the obligation on us to exert our little strength, feeble as it is, in concurrence with this almighty aid.

we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

moment in many respects, and particularly in the conduct of our devotions; for we are surrounded with so much ignorance and prejudice, that in many instances *we do not know what we should pray for as we ought*, because we know not on the whole what may be best for us; but the Spirit itself manages these affairs for us, guiding our minds to suitable petitions, and exciting in them correspondent affections, and sometimes inspiring us with that intense ardour of holy desire which no words can express, but must therefore vent themselves in *unutterable*

SECT.
XVII.
Rom.
viii. 26.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

groanings. But though we are not able to speak these desires, they are not concealed from God: he who searcheth the inmost recesses of human hearts knoweth what [is] the mind of the Spirit;† he reads all the secret agitations of our spirits which answer to the emotions of his; for he manages affairs for the saints according to [the] gracious [will] and appointment [of] God:‡ a circumstance which we cannot recollect without the greatest pleasure, and the most cheerful expectations of receiving every suitable blessing in consequence of it, and in answer to those prayers which are presented to God under such influence.

IMPROVEMENT.

For ever adored be the divine goodness, in sending down his Spirit on such sinful creatures to *help our infirmities*; to implant and to excite graces in our hearts, to be a source of present delights and of eternal happiness. May we feel him helping our infirmities and improving our joy in the Lord to such a degree, that all our devotions may be animated sacrifices! Let not the want of expression in that case trouble us; these unutterable groanings are sometimes the sweetest music in the ear of God.

† *The mind of the Spirit.*] The phrase is here φρονημα το πνευματος, the very same that was used ver. 6: and expresses not merely the meaning, but the temper and disposition of the mind, as, under the influences of the Divine Spirit, pursuing and breathing after such blessings as suits its rational and immortal nature.

‡ *Manages affairs for the saints, &c.*] I agree with a late ingenious writer, several times mentioned before, in rendering ενλογαζεν υπερ αγων, manages affairs

for the saints, as the office of an intercessor with God is so peculiarly that of Christ, our Advocate with the Father, 1 John ii. 1. As for the phrase κατα Θεου, it is capable of many different significations; but I do not think it here signifies the same with ενωπαριον τη Θεω, in the presence of God, but rather on the part of God, that is, by his appointment, or perhaps, as we render it, according to the will of God. I have therefore retained our version, and included both the senses in the paraphrase.

SECT. XVII. Well may such fervent groanings be excited, when we view that great and glorious object which the gospel proposes to our hope. Let us encounter the sufferings of the present time with a fortitude becoming those that see them so short and so far overbalanced by the immense and boundless prospects which lie beyond them; prospects of unclouded lustre and unmingled felicity.

Ver. 18.

19 When we consider the state of that part of the world in which Christianity is unknown, or of those among whom it is a mere empty form; when we consider the vanity to which that part of
20 God's creation is subject, let it move our compassion and our prayers, that the state of glorious liberty into which God has already brought those who by faith in Christ are his children
21 may become more universally prevalent, and *the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth as the waters cover the channel of the seas.* Oh that divine and omnipotent grace may give a birth to that grand event, in the expectation of which nature seems in pangs; such a birth that nations might be born in a
22 day: and where the children are born, may it give a more abundant growth and more happy increase!

We have received what the travailing creation has not, the
23 first-fruits of the Spirit, and they must surely excite us to groan after the redemption of bodies; yet still with humble submission to the will of God, waiting his wisely-appointed hour for the dissolution and for the restoration of them. That God in whose hand these important events are, best knows how long to exercise our faith, whether in this mortal world or in the intermediate state; nor should any delay be esteemed long by those who have so cheerful an hope of enjoying God for ever.

SECT. XVIII.

The apostle represents other advantages for holiness which the gospel gives us, particularly those which arise from an assurance that all things shall work together for our good; and from the view we have, as true Christians, of an eternal gracious plan which God has laid for our happiness, in pursuance of which he hath already done such great things for us, especially in sending his Son for our redemption; whence his people may be assured that no accusation shall prevail against them, and no temptations separate them from his love. Rom. viii. 28, to the end.

ROMANS VIII. 28.

I HAVE taken occasion to hint at many privileges which, in consequence of participating of the gospel, you enjoy: and now I must

ROMANS VIII. 28.

AND we know that

all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate,^a to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.

add this to the rest, that though our afflictions may lie heavy upon us, and though our burdens may continue long, yet we assuredly know that *all things* which occur in the course of Divine Providence, either in their present and immediate, or future and more remote consequences, do and shall *work together for* real and everlasting good to them that sincerely and prevalently love the blessed God,^a and are by divine grace called and formed to this happy principle, according to [his] gracious and effectual purpose.

SECT.
XVIII.
Rom.
viii. 28.

We have this confidence, I say, because God in 29 his eternal counsels designed this, and appointed a proper series of subordinate causes to make way for that blessed event in which all is to terminate; establishing a certain connection between the one and the other; a connection which in the greatest distress is our confidence and our joy: *For whom he foreknew* as the objects of his peculiarly favourable regards,^b knowing with everlasting complacency his own thoughts of peace towards them, (compare Jer. xxix. 2.) *he did also predestinate* [to] stand in a peculiar relation to the great Redeemer, and [be] made in due time conformable to the image of that glorious and blessed Person, even Jesus his only-begotten and best-beloved Son, who is now exalted high above all heavens. He appointed, I say, such a conformity between him and them, *that he might be*, and appear to be, *the first-born among many brethren*; and might at length see many of his brethren by his means sharing with him in that happiness to which he

^a *All things* which occur in the course of Divine Providence, &c.] It is so plain from the whole context that the apostle only speaks of providential events, and it is so evident that the universal expression *all* is sometimes to be taken in a limited sense, that it must argue, I fear, something worse than weakness, to pretend that sin is comprehended in the apostle's assertion. Plato's sentence, so nearly parallel to this, is a commentary infinitely preferable to such an explication. "Whether a righteous man be in poverty, sickness, or any other calamity, we must conclude that it will turn to his advantage either in life or death." See Plato de Rep. lib. ix.

^b *Whom he foreknew* as the objects of his peculiarly favourable regards.] *To know* sometimes signifies *to favour*, Amos iii. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 19; Exod. xxxiii. 12, 17; Psal. i. 6; Jer. x. 14; Rom. xi. 2; 1 Pet. i. 2; Hos. xiii. 5; and they who interpret these verses, as Mr. Locke and many others do, of God's intending to bring the Gentiles into the church on a footing of equal privileges with the Jews, must certainly take the word in this sense. But the reader will easily perceive, by my paraphrase, that I consider them as applicable to all true Christians, whether originally of Jewish or Gentile descent; as the privileges themselves relate not to communities as such, but to individuals.

SECT. XVIII. is now received, and in which he shall for ever shine, distinguished from them all in rays of peculiar glory. To this felicity did the Father of mercy decree to raise a part of our fallen and miserable race; *and those whom he thus predestinated he in due time hath called*, or will hereafter in their succeeding generations call, by the invitations of the gospel and operations of his Spirit, to repent and believe, that so they might claim the promised blessings, in virtue of that everlasting covenant which they cordially embrace; *and whom he hath thus called, he hath, on their compliance with that call, justified,*^c freed them from the condemning sentence of his law, and given them a pleadable right to a full acquittal at his bar; *and those whom he hath thus justified he hath also glorified,*^d that is, he hath appointed they should ere long attain to complete glory and happiness, to which, by virtue of their union with him, they may be said even now to arrive. (Eph. iii. 4.)

Rom.
viii. 30.

30 Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 On the whole, *what shall we therefore say to these things*, or conclude upon this review? surely we may courageously defy all our enemies, and say, *If that God who hath all power in himself, and all the events of time and eternity under his direction, [be,] as we have heard, for us, who [can] presume to [be] against us, or be able to do us any hurt by the fiercest opposition,*

31 What shall we then say to these things? if God be for us, who can be against us?

^c *Whom he hath called he hath justified.*] Barclay pleads that this justification must include holiness, or it is left out of the chain. Barcl. Apol. p. 221. But the apostle had so plainly declared, in the beginning of the chapter, that a freedom from condemnation was the peculiar privilege of those who walk after the Spirit, that it was the less necessary for him here distinctly to mention sanctification.

^d *Whom he justified he glorified.*] It is plain that justification is here considered as distinct from and prior to glorification; and consequently, that there is a sense in which believers may be said to be justified now, (as they often are, compare Luke xviii. 14; Acts xiii. 39; Rom. v. 9; 1 Cor. vi. 11,) though it is at the great day that their complete justification will be declared; and there seems generally to be an ultimate reference to that great transaction, in the use of this forensick term. (Mat. xii. 37; Rom. ii. 13; chap.

iii. 30.) To suppose that Christians are said to be glorified merely in reference to the Spirit of glory now resting upon them, (1 Pet. iv. 14,) is limiting the phrase to a sense less sublime and extensive than it generally has, particularly verse 17, 18; 2 Cor. iv. 17; Col. i. 27, chap. iii. 4; 1 Thess. ii. 12; 1 Pet. v. 10, to which a multitude of other texts might be added, where glory refers to the exaltation and blessedness of the future state.—This is a memorable instance, and there are scores, and perhaps hundreds more, in which things that shall certainly and speedily be done are spoken of as done already. Moses gave a remarkable example of this noble language of faith, in his song (Exod. xv. 13, &c.) on the destruction of Pharaoh in the Red Sea; and the prophets and apostles have continued it in a variety of triumphant passages, which it will be a great pleasure to the pious reader to observe for himself,

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth;

34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right-hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

while we are guarded by such a Protector? SECT. XVIII. Yea, I may add, not only what have we to fear, but what have we not to hope and expect, in connection with such views as these? *he that spared not his own*, his proper and only-begotten Son, when even his blood and life came into question, *but willingly delivered him up* to agony and death, that he might be a sacrifice for us all, *how shall he not with him freely grant us all other things* subservient to our truest happiness, which may now be regarded as the purchase of his blood? We may reasonably conclude that what is now withheld would be detrimental rather than advantageous to us.

Rom. viii. 32.

Upon the whole, then, we may take courage 33 and say, *Who shall lodge any accusation against the elect of God,*^e against those who love him, and have been, as we before observed, predestinated and called according to his eternal purpose? [*Is it*] *God?* What! *he who himself justifieth*^f as the prophet in his own case expresses it; (Isa. l. 8, 9.) he is ready to answer all objections, and solemnly to pronounce us absolved: *Who [is] he then that condemneth?* [*Is it*] 34 the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we know to be appointed as the final Judge? What! doth *he* condemn, *who hath died* to expiate our guilt and rescue us from condemnation; *yea rather*, (which is the most delightful consideration of all,) *who is risen again?* shall he undo the purposes of his death and resurrection? He *who is now sitting at the right hand of God*, where he appears under a quite contrary character, *and is also making intercession for us*; undertaking the management of our affairs, and, far from accusing us, appears ready to answer all accusations brought against us, and to frustrate all the designs of our enemies?

^e *Who shall lodge any accusation?* &c.] This *εγκαλεσει* plainly signifies.—By the *elect of God* many understand the Gentiles; but as it is certain the phrase, whatever it imports, is not to be confined to them, and is presently after used of *believing Jews*, (Rom. xi. 5, 7, 28.) it seems highly reasonable to consider it here as including them also; especially as their unbelieving brethren might be ready to lodge the heaviest accusations against them, as deserters

and apostates from their own law, if they had acted on the principles the apostles had been laying down in the former chapter.

^f *God who justifieth*, &c.] I here follow the pointing proposed by the learned and ingenious Dr. Sam. Harris, (in his *Observations*, p. 54, 55.) which greatly illustrates the spirit of this passage, and shows how justly that author adds that it is remarkably in the grand manner of Demosthenes.

98 *Nothing therefore shall separate us from the love of Christ.*

SECT. XVIII. Confident therefore in his protection and favour, we defy them all; and say in strains of yet sublimer triumph, *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* Who or what shall dissolve that union to him which is our great security, and be able to alienate our hearts from him who is the source of such invaluable blessings, and hath displayed such incomparable riches of grace? [*Shall*] the severest affliction^s or the most pressing straits, or the most cruel persecution, to the inconveniences and extremities of which we may indeed be exposed in our Christian warfare; or hunger, if we be starving in desolate places;^h or nakedness, if it had not so much as sheep-skins or goat-skins to cover it; or, in a word, any other peril to which in our different situations we may be exposed, or, even the drawn sword of our blood-thirsty enemies, ready to be plunged into our defenceless bosoms? It may indeed cut short the residue of our mortal days; as it is written, in words which may justly be applied to us, (Psal. xlv. 22) “*For thy sake we are*” “*without remorse killed all the day long, we*” “*are accounted as so many sheep destined to the*” “*slaughter, and delivered over to it without*” “*resistance on our part or mercy on that of*” “*our enemies.*” Nevertheless, while we appear in so weak and helpless a state, *we do in all these things more than conquer*, we triumph in certain and illustrious victory, *through him who hath loved us*, and having redeemed us to God by his own blood, will secure us amidst all these temptations, and finally show that our sufferings and death have been precious in his sight, and have made a part in his merciful scheme for our more exalted happiness.

38 Well may I thus boast of the securest and completest victory, even amidst the combat; *for I am persuaded that neither the fear of death, in any imaginable form of terror, nor the hope*

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 (As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.)

37 Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor

[*Shall affliction, &c.*] None can imagine that Christ would love a good Christian the less for enduring such extremities for his sake. The text must therefore be intended to express the apostle's confidence that God's invariable love to his people, illustrated already in so glo-

rious a manner, would engage him to support them under all their trials, by vital communications of divine strength.

^h *Hunger.*] The word λιμνη is more extensive than *famine*, and may be applied to personal as well as public necessity.

angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, and desire of life, in the most agreeable circumstances that can be imagined, nor all the efforts of infernal angels, nor of principalities nor of powers,ⁱ however various their rank, however subtle their artifices, however furious and malignant their rage may be, nor things present, difficult as they are, nor things future, extreme as they may possibly prove : Nor the height of prosperity nor the depth of adversity, nor any other creature, above or beneath, in heaven, earth or hell, shall be able to separate any of us, who are Christians indeed, from the love of the almighty and ever-blessed God, which is graciously given us in Christ Jesus our Lord,^k by a tenure so certain, that it shall never be lost: and being thus secure that nothing shall separate us from that, we assuredly know that nothing can, on the whole, hurt us; and feel a courage which nothing can dismay.

SECT. XVIII.
Rom. viii. 38.

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

height of prosperity nor the depth of adversity, nor any other creature, above or beneath, in heaven, earth or hell, shall be able to separate any of us, who are Christians indeed, from the love of the almighty and ever-blessed God, which is graciously given us in Christ Jesus our Lord,^k by a tenure so certain, that it shall never be lost: and being thus secure that nothing shall separate us from that, we assuredly know that nothing can, on the whole, hurt us; and feel a courage which nothing can dismay.

IMPROVEMENT.

O BLESSED souls indeed, who having been in the eternal Ver. counsels of the Divine love foreknown and predestinated, are, in 29, 30 consequence thereof, called and justified, as the earnest of being ere long glorified! Who would not desire to see his own title to privileges so inestimable as these? And how shall we know that we have our part in them? how but by securing an evidence 28 that we love God? Then may we be assured that *all things shall work together for our good*, and glory in it that we are the elect 33 of God; to whose charge therefore nothing shall be alleged, 34 since God justifieth; whom none shall condemn, since Christ died to expiate our sins, and is ascended into heaven continually to intercede for us. In cheerful dependence on his patronage and care, let us bid defiance to all our enemies, and 35 be willing to submit to the greatest extremities, since they shall 36 not be able to *separate us from the love of Christ*, even though

ⁱ *Angels, principalities and powers.*] Elser (Observ. Vol. 11. p. 42.) has sufficiently shown that *good angels* are sometimes called *powers*, to express their being used as instruments of the Divine power, (compare Eph. i. 21, chap. i. 10; Col. i. 16. chap. ii. 10.) as likewise that *αγγέλαι* may signify *magistrates*, compare Tit. iii. 1. But as it is certain that *evil angels* are called *principalities and powers*, (Eph. vi. 12; Col. ii. 15.) and as that interpretation of the words best suits the context, (for it is not to be thought that *good angels* would attempt to separate

men from Christ's love,) I must adhere to it.

^k *Shall separate us, &c.*] Archbishop Tillotson thinks (Vol. I. p. 491.) Paul speaks thus confidently in reference to himself, and the experience he had passed through of so peculiar a nature; but he seems to me to found the argument on considerations common to all Christians, ver. 28; and the connection is such, that if these latter clauses are limited to St. Paul, I do not see how the preceding can be extended farther.

SECT. for his sake we should be killed all the day long, and accounted as
XVIII. *sheep for the slaughter.*

Ver.
38, 39 O blessed souls, whom neither death nor life, nor angels, nor any other creature, shall be able to divide and cut off from the love of God! What then can harm us? what evil can we then suffer? what good can we want? When God is for us, and when we are sensible of his love in giving us his Son, how can we allow ourselves to suspect his readiness with him to give us all things truly reasonable or desirable? All other blessings, when compared with these, will appear unworthy of a mention; and we should have great reason to suspect that they were not ours, if we did not find a heart superlatively to value them above every thing else.

SECT. XIX.

The apostle now finding it necessary to speak more expressly of the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, introduces the subject with very tender expressions of his regard to his Jewish brethren; and then shows that the rejection of a considerable part of the seed of Abraham, and even of the posterity of Isaac, from the peculiar privileges of God's chosen people, was an incontestable fact, which the Jews could not but grant to have happened, that is, with regard to the descendants of Ishmael and of Esau. Rom. ix. 1—13.

ROMANS IX. 1.

SECT.
XIX.

Rom.
ix. 1.

THUS, my brethren, I have endeavoured to animate you by leading your meditations to those inestimable privileges which we receive in virtue of the gospel, which renders us so far superior to all the hardships we can endure; and I hope the thought of them will be abundantly sufficient to establish your adherence to it. Faithfulness will also oblige me to add, that as all who embrace and obey this gospel, whether Jews or Gentiles, are accepted of God, so all who reject it are rejected by him.^a And lest, while I maintain this important truth, any

ROMANS IX. 1.

I SAY the truth in

^a As all who embrace, &c.] This the apostle had intimated all along in the preceding discourse, which is addressed to Christians as Christians, without any regard to their having been Jews or Gentiles; nay, he had expressly declared in the 2d and 3d chapters, that their having been Gentiles would be no obstruction. And it is certain the peculiar oppositions and persecutions which

the believing Jews met with from their obstinate countrymen would make encouragements and consolations like those suggested in the eighth chapter, as necessary for them as for any Christians in the world. So very much mistaken have some learned commentators been in the peculiar turn they have given to that chapter, and several passages in those preceding it.

Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

should imagine that I bear hard upon my dear countrymen the Jews, on account of any personal injury which I, or my Christian brethren of whose sufferings I have been speaking, (chap. viii. 35—39,) have received from them or by their means; I begin this discourse with the most solemn assurance I can give you to the contrary. And herein *I say the truth in Christ*, I speak with that candour and integrity which becomes a Christian, and as in the presence of that blessed Redeemer who searches all hearts. He knows that *I lie not; my conscience also bearing me witness* as to the truth of what I say in the *Holy Ghost*, as under his influence who so thoroughly discerns the soul on which he operates.

SECT.

XIX.

Rom.

ix. 1.

² That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

³ For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

With all this solemnity, on so great an occasion, ² do I declare to you, *that I have great grief and incessant anguish in my heart*, when I think of what hath happened and will happen unto them in consequence of their opposition to the gospel. *For methinks*, if I may be allowed ³ to express myself so, *I could even wish, that as Christ subjected himself to the curse, that he might deliver us from it, so I myself likewise were made an anathema after the example of Christ;*^b like him exposed to all the execrations of an enraged people, and even to the infamous and accursed death of crucifixion itself, *for the sake of my brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh*, that they might thereby be delivered from the guilt they have brought upon their own heads, and become entitled to the forfeited and rejected blessings of the Messiah's kingdom.

⁴ Who are Israel- So cordial and disinterested a regard have I for ⁴

^b *Made an anathema after the example of Christ.*] This sense is given by the learned Dr. Waterland, (Serm. Vol. I. p. 77, 78.) who urges the manner in which *απο* is used, 2 Tim. i. 3, *απο των πατριων*. after the example of my forefathers. Compare 1 John iii. 16. Next to this I should incline to the interpretation given by Dr. Clarke, (Seventeen Serm. p. 340.) who supposes the apostle means, that he could be content that Christ should give him up to such calamities as those to which the Jewish people were doomed for rejecting him; so that if they could all be centred in one person, he could be willing they

should unite in him, could he thereby be a means of saving his countrymen. Compare Deut. vii. 26; Josh. vi. 17, chap. vii. 12.—Grotius understands it of a separation from the church of Christ, (which is sometimes called by the name Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 12; Gal. iii. 27.) or of excommunication.—Elsner (who, agreeable to Dr. Clarke's interpretation, joins *απο τα Χριστι* with *νυχομην*,) shows very well, as many other commentators have done, how very absurd it would be to suppose he meant that he could be content to be delivered over to everlasting misery for the good of others.

SECT. my dear nation, *who are Israelites,*^c the seed
 XIX. of Jacob that eminent patriarch, who, as a
 prince, had power with God, and prevailed;
 Rom. *whose the spiritual adoption [is,*^d in consequence
 ix. 4. of which, as a people, they were called the sons
 and daughters of the most high God; *and the
 glory, which in the Shechinah resided visibly
 among them on the mercy-seat,*^e *and the cove-
 nants made successively, first with Abraham and
 then with Moses, and with the whole Jewish peo-
 ple in him, who were honoured with the giving
 of the law in such solemn pomp, and received
 with the precepts of that excellent polity an ex-
 act ritual for the service [of God] in their taber-
 nacles, afterwards practised in their temple with
 unequalled solemnity and magnificence; who
 were also the heirs of such peculiar and impor-
 tant promises, relating not only to their abode
 in Canaan, under the administration of an equal
 and miraculous providence, but likewise includ-
 ing and centring in the spiritual kingdom of
 the Messiah, who was to arise among them.*

5 I cannot but have a respectful and tender regard
 for a nation thus dignified and distinguished; a
 nation *whose privileges [are] handed down to
 them from so many illustrious ancestors, in a
 long descent, who were in their respective ages
 the great fathers of the world and church; and
 from whom, to crown the whole, according to
 the flesh Christ himself is [descended,] who,
 though found in fashion like a man, and truly
 partaker of our nature in all its sinless infirmi-
 ties, is also possessed of a divine nature, by vir-
 tue of which he is above all our conceptions
 and praises, above creatures of the highest or-
 der, and indeed God blessed for ever,*^f the wor-

5 *Whose are the
 fathers, and of
 whom, as concern-
 ing the flesh, Christ
 came, who is over all,
 God blessed for ever.
 Amen.*

^c *Who are Israelites.]* The apostle, with
 great address, enumerates these privi-
 leges of the Jews; both that he might show
 how honourably he thought of them, and
 that he might awaken their solicitude not
 to sacrifice that Divine favour by which
 they had been so eminently and so long
 distinguished.

^d *The spiritual adoption is.]* That is,
 whom God hath taken into a special cov-
 enant with himself, whereby he stands
 engaged ever to act the part of a God
 and Father to them, and to own them as

his children. Deut. xiv. 1; Jer. xxxi. 9;
 Exod. iv. 22; Hos. xi. 1.

^e *Resided on the mercy-seat.]* Hence
 the ark was called *the glory*: Psal. lxxviii.
 61; 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22; to which some add
 Psal. lxiii. 2.

^f *Above all, God blessed for ever.]* How
 ingenious soever that conjecture may be
 thought by which some would read this
 ὡς ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων, to answer to ὡς
 οἱ πατέρες, (*whose are the fathers, and
 whose is the supreme God,*) I think it
 would be extremely dangerous to follow

thy Object of our humblest adoration, as well as unreserved dependence, love and obedience. **SECT. XIX.**
Amen: Let his divine glories be ever proclaimed and confessed! May all the house of Israel know this assuredly, and fall down before him, as, in and with the Father of all, their Lord and their God! **Rom. ix. 5.**

6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel which are of Israel:

Yet, notwithstanding all these tender prejudices in favour of my own dear countrymen, I cannot defend or excuse their conduct; nor must I conceal the ungrateful truth asserted above, that by rejecting the gospel they bring upon themselves rejection from God. But to prevent mistakes, let me in the first place observe, that it is *not* to be supposed I would *by any means* insinuate *that the word of God hath fallen ineffectual to the ground*, even all that glorious system of promises by which he engaged to bestow protection, favour, and happiness upon his people. For in order to provide against any such allegation, I must insist upon it, as a very certain and apparent truth, that *all* [are] *not* reckoned to be the *Israel* of God, so as to be the heirs of the promises made to his people, *who are descended of Israel* by natural generation:

7 Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, the head of the holy family according to the flesh, [are they] *all children of the promise*; but you know it is said, (Gen. xxi. 12,) though Ishmael were the son of Abraham long before, "*In Isaac, then unborn, shall thy seed be called*; the descendants of Isaac shall be spoken of as thy seed by way of eminence, to the exclusion of those who may spring from thee by thine other children." That is, on the whole, *not the children of the flesh* alone, nor any of them merely as such, [are] *the children of God*, but *the children of the promise*, in one peculiar line, are accounted as the seed of Abraham, and

8 That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

this reading, unsupported as it is by any critical authority of manuscripts or ancient quotations.—Nor can I find any authority for rendering Θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τὰς αἰῶνας, God be blessed for ever. I must therefore render and paraphrase and improve this memorable text, as a proof of Christ's proper deity which I

think the opposers of that doctrine have never been able nor will ever be able to answer: Though common sense must teach, what Christians have always believed, that it is not with respect to the Father, but to the created world, that this august title is given to him. Compare 1 Cor. xv. 27, &c.

- SECT. honoured with the adoption: *For this [is] the* 9 For this is the word
 XIX. *word of the promise, (Gen xviii. 10, 14.) "Ac-* of promise, At this
 ——— *cording to this time, that is, reckoning the* time will I come, and
 Rom. *"conception of the child from hence, I will* son.
 ix. 9. *"come [to thee] in a way of gracious and mer-*
"ciful interposition, and Sarah shall have a
"son:" which was said when Hagar had many
years been Abraham's wife, and had long since
born a son to him.
- 10 Nor was [*this*] the only instance of the kind; 10 And not only
but in the case of Rebecca, when she was with this, but when Re-
*child of twins by one man, that is, our father*becca also had con-
 11 *Isaac; While [the children] were not yet born,*ceived by one, even
and had done neither good to merit nor evil to by our father Isaac,
forfeit the divine favour, that the sovereign pur- 11 (For the children
pose of God, according to his free election, might being not yet born,
stand stedfast, and appear not to be formed in neither having done
respect of the works done by either, but accord- any good or evil,
ing to the mere good pleasure of him who calleth that the purpose of
things that do not yet exist into being, and dis- God according to
poseth of all according to his own will: It was election might stand,
 12 *said to her, when consulting the divine oracle* not of works, but of
on the unusual commotion she felt in her womb, him that calleth :)
that two different people should proceed from
the birth then approaching, (Gen. xxv. 23.) and
"that the elder of them, that is, the posterity
"of Esau, should serve the younger, that is, the
 13 *"descendants of Jacob." As it is also writ-* 12 It was said unto
ten, (Mal. i. 2, 3.) "I have loved Jacob and her, The elder shall
"hated Esau, that is, I have greatly preferred serve the younger.
"the former to the latter; § bestowing many

§ Greatly preferred the former to the latter.] That to love and hate have this sense in scripture, is evident. Compare Gen. xxix. 31; Luke xiv. 26; John xii. 25, and the notes there. These words, in their connection with the preceding and following, do indeed prove that God acts with a sovereign and unaccountable freedom in the dispensation of his favours; and do, I think, consequently prove that it was not upon the foresight of the obedience and piety of Jacob on the one hand, or the profaneness of Esau on the other, that this preference was given; for then the argument taken from their having actually done neither good nor evil would be very weak, since, to an omniscient God, that which he certainly foreknew would be, is, with regard to his purpose of events, to succeed

it as if it already were. Nevertheless it is certain the apostle does not here speak of the eternal state of Jacob and Esau, (whatever some may suppose deducible from what he says,) nor does he indeed so much speak of their persons as of their posterity; since it is plainly to that posterity that both the prophecies which he quotes in support of his argument refer: Gen. xxv. 23; Mal. i. 2, 3. His laying waste the heritage of the Edomites for the dragons of the wilderness, is so different a thing from his appointing the person of Esau to eternal misery by a mere act of sovereignty, without regard to any thing done or to be done by him to deserve it, that I will rather submit to any censure from my fellow-servants than deal so freely with my Maker as to conclude the one from the other.

“ peculiar privileges and favours upon the pos-
 “ terity of Jacob which I have denied to that
 “ of Esau, whose habitation I have laid waste
 “ for the dragons of the wilderness, while that
 “ of his brother flourished in the richest abun-
 “ dance of all things.” We see then, to close
 this branch of the argument, that the exclusion
 of a considerable part of the seed of Abraham,
 and even of the descendants of Isaac, from the
 special promises of God, is not only a case
 which may be supposed possible, but a case
 which, according to the Jewish scriptures them-
 selves, hath actually happened.

SECT.

XIX.

Rom.
ix. 13.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET that affection which the apostle expresses for the Jews, Ver.
 his countrymen and brethren according to the flesh, and the^{1, 2}
 tender and pathetic representation which he makes of the privi-
 leges which they once enjoyed, awaken in our hearts an earnest
 solicitude that they may, by divine grace, be brought back;
 that they may again be adopted into the family from which they
 have been cut off, again clothed with the glory which is de-⁴
 parted from them; that through him who was given for a cove-
 nant to the people they may receive the law of life and grace,
 be formed to that spiritual service which it introduces instead
 of their pompous ritual, and embrace the promises on which the⁵
 faith and hope of their illustrious fathers were fixed.

Let it likewise teach us spiritual compassion for our kindred⁸
 who are strangers to Christ, and let us be willing to submit to
 the greatest difficulties, and think nothing too much to be done
 or borne for their recovery.

Let our souls pay an humble homage to him who is in such
 an incommunicable and sublime sense the Son of God, as to be
 himself *over all, God blessed for evermore*. With prostrate re-⁵
 verence let us adore him as our Lord and our God, and repose
 that unbounded confidence in him which such an assemblage of
 divine perfections will warrant, putting our most hearty amen
 to every ascription of glory, to every anthem of praise, address-
 ed to him.

And to conclude: since we see that many of the children of^{6, 7}
 Abraham and of Isaac failed of any share in the special promises
 of God, let us learn to depend on no privilege of birth, on no
 relation to the greatest and best of men. May we seek to be in-
 serted into the family of God, by his adopting love in Christ^{10—13}
 Jesus, and to maintain the lively exercise of faith; without which
 no child of Abraham was ever acceptable to God, and with which
 none of the children of strangers have ever failed of a share in
 his mercy and favour.

SECT. XX.

The apostle shows that the sovereign choice of some individuals to peculiar privileges, to which none had any claim, and the sovereign appointment, from among many criminals, of some to peculiar and exemplary punishments, was perfectly consistent both with reason and scripture.
Rom. ix. 14—24.

ROMANS IX. 14.

SECT.
XX.Rom.
ix. 14.

I HAVE already shown you how possible it is that persons descended from Abraham, and even from Isaac, may be cut off from the special promises of God; as the posterity, first of Ishmael and then of Esau, evidently were. *What therefore shall we say to this? [Is there] unrighteousness with God in the proceedings and distributions of his providence, in this or in any other instance to be produced? God forbid we should insinuate any thing of that nature! It is, in the highest consistence with justice, matter of the freest choice to whom such favours shall be*
15 *granted. For he saith to Moses, (Exod. xxxiii. 19.) when intimating a gracious purpose toward Israel, though they had broke his covenant so soon after the first confirmation of it, and by an act of flagrant idolatry had justly merited immediate destruction, I will have mercy on whomsoever I will have mercy, and will compassionate whomsoever I please to compassionate, so as to dispense acts of pardon according to my own sovereign pleasure.*

16 Jacob and Esau, of whom I was speaking just above, may be farther considered as an illustration of the sovereignty of the divine dispensations in such cases: the latter of them, after he had foolishly sold his birth-right, was exceedingly desirous of obtaining his father's blessing, and ran out eagerly to hunt venison for him; (Gen. xxvii. 5—30.) nevertheless it was bestowed upon Jacob. *[It is] not therefore, you see, to be referred unto the forwardness of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but it is of God that sheweth mercy to one rather than another, on sovereign reasons which we cannot penetrate, but must always believe to be worthy of himself.*

17 And moreover we may add, that such is the

ROMANS IX. 14.

WHAT shall we say then? *Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid!*

15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

17 For the scrip-

ture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

conduct of God in other instances, when of various sinners he appoints one rather than another to be a monument of special vengeance :

For the scripture says to Pharaoh,^a (Exod. ix. 16,) “ For this cause have I raised thee up to that

“ height of eminence in which thou gloriest,^b “ that I may remarkably show forth my power

“ in thee, and that my name, in consequence of

“ distinguished judgments to be righteously in-

“ flicted upon thee, may be celebrated through all

“ the earth, in the most distant nations and re-

“ motest ages.” And accordingly he hardened

his heart that he should not let Israel go; that

is, he took measures which he knew would be

attended with that effect, and at last brought the

extremity of his wrath upon him. So then we

must, after all our objections, rest the matter

here, that the blessed God, as he is uncontroll-

able, so he is also unaccountable in his dispens-

sations; that in choosing this or that creature

to distinguished favours, or appointing this or

that sinner to deserved punishment, he hath

mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he hard-

deneth and destroyeth whom he will.

But thou wilt perhaps be ready, while thou

readest this declaration, to raise an objection

against it, and say to me, “ If God acts thus,

“ why doth he then find fault and blame his

“ creatures for their obstinacy, when he deter-

“ mines to give what he knows will in fact prove

SECT.
XX.

Rom.
ix. 17.

18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find

^a Moreover the scripture says, &c.] It is plain that this is no proof of what immediately goes before; I therefore choose to render *yet* by *moreover*, which is consistent with making it introductory to what proves something asserted at some distance, if it come in as a co-ordinate proof. This is so important a remark in the illustration of scripture, and clears an attentive reader of so many embarrassments, that I hope I shall be excused repeating it on different occasions. The reader will observe the apostle does not produce an instance of an innocent person being made an object of divine displeasure out of mere sovereignty, but one of the most insolent sinners that the world ever knew.

^b I have raised thee up.] Some would render it, I have made thee to stand; that is, I have supported thee during the for-

mer plagues, that I might make thee a more remarkable example of vengeance; but though (as Dr. Shuckford, Connect. Vol. II. p. 433, and many others, observe,) that agree with *διεληκθης*, the word used by the LXX. in their version of the text in question, and with the original *העמרתך*, yet it does not answer to the Greek word used by St. Paul, *εξηγειμα*. If, as some writers suppose, the Pharaoh here spoken of were an Egyptian king (I think Apophis,) who made his way to the throne by treason, incest, and murder, the words had a singular weight in the sense we have here given them. Mr. Taylor explains it of his having been recovered from the plague of blains, which was indeed said to have been upon Pharaoh, Exod. ix. 15, 16; and this may possibly be the true sense, but I think the other stronger and nobler.

SECT. "a prevailing occasion to it? *Who hath ever, fault? for who hath*
XX. "in any instance, *resisted*, or who can ever be resisted his will?

— "able to resist *his will*? If he hath determined
Rom. "by such methods to destroy a nation or a
ix. 19. "person, who can prevent it, or prevent those
"evils which shall, according to his high ap-
"pointments of providence, be in fact the
"means of bringing on that destruction?"

20 *Nay but*, let me rather reply, *Who art thou, O vain, weak, and ignorant man, with all thy boasted wisdom and penetration, who art thou who thus arrogantly enterest into a debate with the all-wise, almighty and all-gracious God, and chargest his proceedings as arbitrary and unjust? Surely it becomes us, whenever we treat such a subject, to do it with the humblest reverence, and through the whole to remember the infinite distance between him and us. Shall the thing*

20 *Nay but*, O man, who art thou that re-
pliest against God? shall the thing form-
ed say to him that
formed it, *Why hast thou made me thus?*

21 *Hath not the potter power over [his] clay,*^c as God himself represents the case, (Jer. xviii. 4—6,) *out of the same mass to make one vessel to uses of honour, and another to the basest offices of dishonour, and to break and renew it at his*
22 *pleasure? [What] then is it to thee, or what right hast thou to find fault, if God, resolving at last to manifest the terrors of [his] wrath, and to make known his awful and tremendous power in their aggravated destruction, hath in the mean time endured with much long-suffering those who shall finally appear to be the vessels of wrath which are fitted to destruction?*^d *Is he to account to thee for punishing them who justly deserve punishment, at what time and in what manner he pleases, and to ask thy leave to delay or*

21 *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*

22 *What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:*

^c *Potter power over [his] clay.*] It is observable that Plutarch uses the very same similitude with this before us; and Aristophanes, among other contemptuous expressions by which he describes the frailty of human creatures, calls them *πλασµατα πηλυ*, *vessels of clay*. See Bos in loc.

^d *Endures with much long-suffering the*

vessels of wrath, &c.] The apostle seems here to have had the impenitent Jews in his thought, though he did not think it proper expressly to name them. It is certain they were *vessels of wrath*, and that they were long borne with, under many advantages which they ungratefully abused.

23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory?

24 Even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.

to execute the stroke of his righteous vengeance? And [what if,] on the other hand, *that he may make known, in the most affecting and endearing manner, the riches of his glory, and display his compassions in those whom he will make the vessels of mercy, he graciously waits upon them and [long endures] them,^c even [those] whom he hath, by the power of his own grace, previously prepared to glory, that they might in the most honourable manner be at length called to partake of it?* Even us, 24 *whom he hath already called into the happy number of his people, not only of the Jews, but of the Gentiles too.* Shall he make an apology to thee, O man, that he hath appointed some of our sinful race to such mercy; that he hath exercised much long-suffering towards them; that he hath at length wrought upon them by his effectual grace; or that, determining to deal thus mercifully with some of Jacob's race, he hath added to their number others whom he hath taken from Gentile nations? Know thy place, and acquiesce in humble silence. Allow the blessed God to do what he will with his own, and let not thine eyes be evil because he is good.

SECT.
XX.
Rom.
ix. 23.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us learn, from the memorable section which we have now Ver. 14. been reading, humbly to adore the righteousness and holiness of God, in all the most amazing displays of his sovereignty, which we are sure are always consistent with it. Let us own his right to confer on whom he pleaseth those favours which none of us can pretend to have deserved; and adore his wonderful goodness in choosing to exercise mercy and compassion 15 on any of the children of men, yea on many who must own themselves in the number of those who had the least claim to it. He hath of his mere goodness given us those privileges, as Christians and as Protestants, which he hath withheld from most nations under heaven. And if we improve them aright,

^c *He waits and endures.*] As it is certain there is an ellipsis in these words, and that something must be supplied, it seems most natural to borrow a word or two from the preceding verse, to complete the sense. Every attentive reader will, I doubt not, infer for himself the great difference of phrase in which they who are vessels of wrath, and they who

are vessels of mercy, are spoken of: it being said simply of the former, that they were fitted for destruction, but of the latter, *that God prepared them for glory.* A distinction of so great importance, that I heartily wish we may ever keep it in view, to guard us against errors on the right hand or on the left. Compare Mat. xxv. 34, 41, and the note there.

SECT. we have undoubtedly reason to look upon ourselves as vessels
 XX. of mercy whom he is preparing for eternal glory. Let us adore
 Ver. 23. his distinguishing favour to us, and arrogate nothing to our-
 16 selves. It is *neither of him that willeth nor of him that runneth,*
but of God that showeth mercy, and worketh in us both to will and
to do of his own good pleasure.

22 Long did his patience wait on us; and let that patience be for
 ever adored! It shall be glorified even in those that perish: for
 he is so far from destroying innocent creatures by a mere arbitrary
 act of power and terror, that he endureth with much long-
 suffering those who by their own incorrigible wickedness prove
 vessels of wrath, and whom the whole assembled world shall
 confess fitted for the destruction to which they shall finally be
 18 consigned. That after long abuse of mercy they are hardened,
 and perhaps after long hardness are at length destroyed; yea,
 that some of the vilest of men are exalted by Providence to a
 17 station that makes their crimes conspicuous as those of Pha-
 raoh, till at length he shows forth his power the more awfully,
 and maketh his name the more illustrious by their ruin, is cer-
 tainly consistent with that justice which the Judge of the whole
 earth will never violate.

But if, in tracing subjects of this kind, difficulties arise beyond
 20 the stretch of our feeble thought, let us remember that we are
 men, and let us not dare to reply against God. Retiring into
 our own ignorance and weakness, as those that are less than
 21 nothing and vanity before him, let us dread by any arrogant
 censure to offend him who has so uncontrollable a power over
 us: *As clay in the hand of the potter, so are we in the hand of*
the Lord our God. Let us acquiesce in the form he has given
 us, in the rank he has assigned us; and instead of perplexing
 ourselves about those secrets of his counsels which it is impos-
 sible for us to penetrate, let us endeavour to purify ourselves
 from whatever would displease him: that so we may, in our re-
 spective stations, be vessels of honour fit for the use of our
 Master now, and entitled to the promise of being acknowledged
 as his in that glorious day when he shall make up his jewels.

SECT. XXI.

*The apostle shows that the admission of the Gentiles to the privileges of
 God's peculiar people, when Israel should be rejected, was so far from
 being inconsistent with scripture, that it had been actually foretold
 both by Hosea and Isaiah. Rom. ix. 25, to the end.*

ROMANS IX. 25.

I HAVE been remonstrating as to the unrea-
 sonableness of quarrelling with the divine dis-

ROMANS IX. 25.
 A S he saith also in

Osee, I will call them my people which were not my people; and her beloved which was not beloved.

pen- sations in distinguishing one creature from another by his favours; or one sinner from another, by appointing him to peculiar severities of punishment not exceeding the demerit of his offence: I will now venture, without farther reserve, to say, that in what I have been writing I had some peculiar reference to God's calling so many of the Gentiles by the grace of his gospel, and his appointing the impenitent Jews to be monuments of wrath. And let me now address myself to the latter, and say, Who gave thee, O Jew, an authority to question and dispute with thy God on this occasion? Yea, is there on the whole any reason for thee, who hast the scriptures of the Old Testament in thine hands, and professest such a regard for them, so much as to be surprised at this, when there are so many hints of it in these divine oracles? As particularly in *Hosea*, where he hath spoken of calling Israel Loammi, as disowning them for their wickedness, and hath also said, (Hos. i. 10.)

"I will call them my people who were not my people before, and her beloved which was not for a long time beloved :" And it shall

26 And it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called, The children of the living God.

"come to pass, [that] in the place where it was most expressly said to them, Ye [are] not my people; there shall they be called not only the people, but the sons and daughters of the living God, by special adoption and favour."

As he is the living God he can easily bring it into execution; and the more you reflect on the whole tenour of his word, the more you will be sensible of the propriety with which I apply this passage, whatever its original sense might be, to the purpose in view. I must also observe, that 27 *Isaiah crieth concerning Israel with great earnestness and affection, (Isa. x. 22, 23,) "Though*

27 Esaias also crieth concerning Israel,

^a *Call them my people which were not my people.*] It seems very evident, from the connection of these words in *Hosea*, that they refer to God's purpose of restoring the Jews to the privileges of his people after they had been a while rejected of him. But it is obvious they might with great propriety be accommodated to the calling of the Gentiles; and indeed that great event might with some probability be inferred, partly from the

temporary rejection of the Jews, of which this text spake, (for it was not to be imagined God would have no people in the world,) and partly as it was in the nature of things more probable that he should call the heathen than that he should restore the Jews, when he had cast them off for such ingratitude as rendered them less worthy of his favour than the most idolatrous nations. Compare *Jefery's True Grounds*, p. 149.

SECT.

XXI.

Rom.
ix. 25.

SECT. "the whole number of the children of Israel be
 XXI. "as the sand of the sea, [yet] only a remnant
 — "shall be saved, and the bulk of the people cut
 Rom. "off. For the Lord is finishing and cutting
 ix. 23. "short his account in righteousness; for the Lord
 "will make a short account upon the earth:^b there
 "shall be such a consumption of them, that
 "when accounts come to be balanced there
 29 "will be found but a very small overplus." As
 the same *Isaiah* hath formerly said, in a passage
 very much resembling that which I just now re-
 ferred to, (*Isa. i. 9.*) "Except the Lord of hosts
 "had left us a seed, we should have been as So-
 "dom, we should have been made like to Gomor-
 "rah." There was then, you see, but a little
 remnant which preserved the whole people
 from being utterly consumed; so that it is no
 unexampled thing that the main body of the
 Jewish nation should fall into a revolt from God,
 and become the object of his displeasure to the
 30 most dreadful degree. What shall we then say
 in the conclusion of the whole argument? Surely
 this: That the Gentiles, who pursued not after
 righteousness, who had a little while ago no
 knowledge or expectation of it, and no desire
 after it, have now, to their own unspeakable
 surprise and that of the whole world, attained
 to righteousness, that is, to the profession of a
 religion whereby they may be justified and sav-
 ed; even the righteousness which is by faith in
 the gospel, and consists in humbly committing
 the soul to Christ in the way that he hath ap-
 31 pointed. But while Israel was pursuing the law
 of righteousness, and expecting to obtain right-
 eousness by legal observances, it hath not attained
 to that which is indeed most properly to be
 called the law of righteousness, that is, to the
 blessings of that dispensation by which alone
 32 righteousness and life is to be secured. And
 wherefore did they miss those blessings? Because
 they never heard of the way to divine favour
 and acceptance? nay; but because [they did] not
 [pursue it] by faith, whereby alone in this

Though the number
 of the children of
 Israel be as the sand
 of the sea, a remnant
 shall be saved.

28 For he will finish
 the work, and cut it
 short in righteous-
 ness: because a short
 work will the Lord
 make upon the earth.

29 And as *Esaias*
 said before, Except
 the Lord of sabaoth
 had left us a seed,
 we had been as So-
 dom, and been made
 like unto Gomorrah.

* 30 What shall we
 say then? That the
 Gentiles which fol-
 lowed not after
 righteousness have
 attained to right-
 eousness, even the
 righteousness which
 is of faith:

31 But Israel,
 which followed after
 the law of righteous-
 ness, hath not at-
 tained to the law of
 righteousness.

32 Wherefore? Be-
 cause they sought it

^b Cutting short his account in righteous-
 ness.] Mr. Locke would translate it, For
 the Lord, finishing or cutting short his work

in righteousness, shall make a short or small
 remnant in the earth. This is undoubtedly
 the sense, but the version is not exact.

not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law: for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone:

33 As it is written, Behold I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

fallen state of our nature it is to be obtained; but merely as if it was to be gained by the works of the law. For they in fact stumbled and fell at that stone of offence which lay in their way:

As it is written in these ever-memorable words, (Isa. viii. 14; chap. xxviii. 16,) “ Behold I lay in Zion, that is, I exhibit in my church, what, though so well fitted to be a foundation of their happiness, shall in fact prove a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, that is, an occasion of sin and ruin to many, through their own prejudice and perverseness; and every one who believeth in him shall not be ashamed, shall not be brought under a necessity of seeking his refuge elsewhere, in helpless and hasty confusion, to which all they who slight him shall at last be reduced.”

SECT.
XXI.
Rom.
ix. 33.

IMPROVEMENT.

How can we sinners of the Gentiles ever sufficiently acknowledge the goodness of God to us in calling us to that full participation of gospel-blessings which we enjoy? That in our native lands, where the name of the true God was so long unknown, we should have the honour of being called his children! Oh that we may indeed be so, not only by an external profession, but by regenerating grace! May we be of that remnant, that little remnant, which shall be saved, when numbers countless as the sand of the sea, which had only the name of God's Israel, shall perish, even in the day when *his work shall be cut short in righteousness!* Ver. 26.

Blessed be God that there is a seed remaining. It is the preservation of the people among which it is found; and had it not been found among us, we had probably long since been made a seat of desolation. May it increase in the rising age, that the pledges of our continued peace and prosperity may be more assured, till our *peace be like a river, and our salvation like the waves of the sea!*

It will be so if we be awakened seriously to inquire how we may be justified before God, and seek that invaluable blessing in the way here pointed out; *if we seek it not as by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ as the Lord our righteousness.* He hath in this respect been to many a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence! May divine grace teach us the necessity of building upon him, of resting upon him the whole stress of our eternal hopes! Then shall they not sink into disappointment and ruin; then shall we not flee away ashamed in that awful day when *the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters of that* 31, 32 33

SECT. final deluge of divine wrath shall overflow every hiding-place
XXI. but that which God hath prepared for us in his own Son.

SECT. XXII.

The apostle shows that God hath offered pardon and salvation on the same equitable, gracious, and easy terms to all; though Israel, by a bigoted attachment to their own law, rejected it. Rom. x. 1—13.

ROMANS X. 1.

SECT.
XXII.

Rom.
x. 1.

YOU see, my brethren, to what this discourse of mine tends, in which I have been representing faith in Christ as the only method to prevent our shame and ruin, without the exception of any, whether Jews or Gentiles, who should reject him. I know how unkind and unjust an interpretation may be put on such an assertion, though thus supported by the sacred oracles themselves; and therefore I think it proper to renew the assurances I before gave, that *the most affectionate desire of my heart, in the accomplishment of which I should find the greatest complacency, and [my] supplication, which I am with daily importunity repeating before God concerning Israel, is for its present and eternal salvation and happiness, which I wish as* 2 *sincerely as my own. For I am ready to testify, from what I well know of them by my own observation and experience, that they have a very ardent zeal for God; but I lament that it is a zeal not regulated according to knowledge, or directed into a right channel, in consequence of which it leads them into the most fatal mistakes* 3 *and excesses: For they being ignorant of the righteousness of God, of the purity of his nature, the extent of his law, and the method which in consequence thereof he hath established for the justification of a sinner; and seeking with great diligence to establish and shore up, as it were, by the most insufficient props, the ruinous edifice of their own righteousness, by the observation of the precepts or expiations of their law,^a have not submitted with due humility to*

ROMANS X. 1.

BRETHREN, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

2 For I bear them record, that they have^a a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge:

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves

^a Observations of the precepts or expiations of their law.] Many writers, and especially the late Dr. Sherlock, in his book of the knowledge of Christ, have been

unto the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise: Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to

the righteousness of God exhibited in his Son, nor placed their own attempts of obedience in a due subordination to that.

This is the most fatal error that can be imagined; for how insensible soever Israel in general may be of it, it is on the whole most certain that *Christ [is] the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,*^b that is, it is the great scope and design of the law to bring men to believe in Christ for righteousness and life, and its ceremonial and moral precepts and constitutions most harmoniously centre in this. *For Moses most exactly describeth the only way of righteousness which is attainable by the law, [when he saith,] again and again, (Lev. xyiii. 5, compared with Deut. xxvii. 26.) The man who doth them shall live in and by them;*^c that is, the man who perfectly observes these precepts in every particular and in every punctilio, he, and he alone, if such a person there be, may claim life and salvation by them. Now this is a way of justification which, when the law has once been broken, becomes absolutely impossible to the transgressor. *But the righteousness which is by faith speaketh* a very different language, and may be considered as expressing itself *thus*: (if I may be allowed to borrow the words of the great Jewish legislator, when representing the plainness and perspicuity of his law, Deut. xxx. 11—14.) “*Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven, that is, as I may in this view accommo-*

SECT.
XXII.

Rom.
x. 4.

much mistaken in the representation they have made of the Pharisaical righteousness, as if it consisted merely in substituting ceremonial observances instead of moral duties. The Pharisees certainly inculcated the external duties of morality, how much soever they might themselves fail in observing them, or rest merely in outward acts; but they trusted in legal expiations to procure the pardon of those evils which might happen; and the composition of these, if I may be allowed the expression, constituted the righteousness which they went about *ἐνσταί*, to establish or prop up, decrepit as it was.

^b *The end of the law.*] The scope of it, as Elsner shows, on this place, that *τελος* signifies; he paraphrases the words, no

one can fulfil the law till he believe in Christ. But that, how true soever, (compare chap. viii. 2—4.) seems not the chief view of the apostle here.

^c *The man that doth them shall live by them.*] The Sinai covenant made no express provision for the pardon of any sin deliberately and wickedly committed against it, and so was indeed a covenant of works; though the dispensation of Moses contained some farther intimation of the covenant of grace which was made with Abraham, and was quite a distinct thing from the law. And the apostle builds so much on these thoughts here and elsewhere, that it will be of importance to render them familiar to the mind, and to trace the evidence and illustration of them in the Mosaic writings.

SECT. " date the passage, to conduct Christ down with bring Christ down
XXII. " him [from thence,] to teach and instruct us, from above.)

Rom. " or to atone for our offences? Or, Who shall 7 Or, Who shall
x. 7. " descend into the deep abyss, that is, to bring descend into the
" Christ again from his abode among the dead deep? (that is, to
" in the bowels of the earth?" No: blessed be bring up Christ again
from the dead.)

God Christ hath already descended from heaven to bring down the gospel, and he hath in a triumphant manner arisen from the dead, to set an everlasting seal to its divine authority; so that there is no more room to puzzle ourselves about difficulties, or to wish for a power of doing what to human skill or strength
8 is impossible. But what saith he afterwards? even these words, so remarkably applicable to the subject before us: "The word is nigh to thee, [even] in thy mouth and in thine heart; " easy to be understood, easy to be remembered, and, if thine heart be rightly disposed, " easy to be practised too." And that is eminently the case with relation to the word of

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach,

9 Christian faith which we preach: For God hath given a very plain and intelligible revelation in his gospel; and the substance of it is this: That if thou dost courageously confess with thy mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and at the same time believe in thy heart, with a vital and influential faith, that God hath raised him from the dead in proof of his divine mission, thou shalt assuredly be saved, whoever thou art, and how heinous and aggravated soever thy past

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 sins may have been. For it is with the heart that a man believeth to righteousness, or so as to obtain justification, nor can any thing but a cordial assent secure that; and with the mouth confession is made to salvation, and that public profession of Christianity is maintained without which a secret conviction of its truth would only condemn. Let therefore the heart and the tongue do their respective parts on this occasion, and your salvation and happiness will be secure; though your obedience to the law of God may have been very defective, and you could have no claim to reward or forgiveness

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 from thence. For the scripture, in reference to Christ, as in the fore-cited text, (Isa. xxviii. 16.) saith, "Every one that believeth in him " shall not be in danger of being ashamed and

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him.

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

“ put to confusion in any imaginable circumstance:” Every one without distinction, for you see there is no difference between Jew and Greek: For the same Lord of all, the Creator, Governor, Preserver, and Benefactor of the whole human species, displays his riches and magnifies his bounty to all that call upon him, imparting to them all the same blessings of his providence and grace. For whosoever shall invoke the name of the Lord shall be saved,^d as the prophet Joel testifies, (Joel ii. 32.) when he had been speaking of those great events which have in part been so wonderfully accomplished in the effusion of the Spirit, and shall be farther fulfilled in those scenes of providence which are shortly to open on the Jewish nation.

SECT.

XXII.

Rom.
x. 12.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET our hearts, after the example of St. Paul here before us, Ver. 1. be overflowing with love and compassion to our brethren, and let us be earnestly interceding with God for their salvation. Where we see a zeal for God, let us pay all due regard to it, and compassionate that ignorance which may sometimes be mingled with it; especially if it effect so important an article as that of our becoming righteous before God by a better righteousness than our own. Let us pray that God would teach us, and would enable us, according to our respective situations, in a proper manner to teach others that Christ is indeed the end of the law, of all the laws which God ever gave to fallen man for righteousness; all were intended to convince men of their need of coming to him that righteousness and life may be obtained.

Great reason have we to adore the divine goodness, and to congratulate ourselves and one another upon our great happiness in this respect, that God hath given us a revelation so obvious and intelligible in all the grand points of it. We have indeed no necessity, no temptation to say, *Who shall go up into heaven?* or, *Who shall descend into the deep?* or, Who, like the industrious but bewildered sages of antiquity, shall cross the seas, to bring that knowledge from distant countries which is wanting in our own? The word is nigh to us; it is indeed in our mouth: Oh that it may be in our heart too! We know a descending, a risen Redeemer. He still visits us in his gospel,

^d *Invoke the name of the Lord, &c.*] Jehovah, the apostle's argument is quite inconclusive. Pearson on the Creed, p. 149.

SECT. still preaches in our assemblies, and stretches out a gentle and
 XXII. compassionate hand to lead us in the way to happiness. May
 our profession of faith in him be cordial, and then it will be
 Ver. open and courageous, whatever sacrifices we may be called to
 9, 10. make. *Believing on him we shall not be ashamed, calling on his
 name we shall be saved; though we can meet with nothing but
 5 despair from a dispensation that saith, The man who perfectly
 doth these precepts shall live by them.*

SECT. XXIII.

The apostle pursues the view given in the last section, and shows that the gospel had been diffused widely through the world; though, according to other prophecies, which he here mentions, from Moses and Isaiah, the Jews had rejected it, while the Gentiles embraced it. Rom. x. 14, to the end.

ROMANS x. 14.

SECT. FROM the promise of salvation to them that
 XXIII. shall call on the name of the Lord, I have
 just been inferring (ver. 12, 13.) that there is
 Rom. no difference between Jews and Gentiles as to
 x. 14. the possibility of obtaining salvation from God.
 And from hence we may farther infer what is
 very sufficient to justify me and my brethren
 in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, though
 we are the objects of so much reproach and
 persecution on that account. Let us therefore
 attend to the inference. For *how shall they call
 on him on whom they have not believed as worthy
 to be invoked with divine honours and adora-
 tion? and how shall they believe on him of whom
 they have not heard? and how shall they hear of
 him without a preacher to carry these important
 tidings, which the light of nature could never
 15 be able to discover? And as for the ministers
 of the gospel, how should they preach except they
 be sent expressly for that purpose? For as we
 were originally Jews, our own prejudices on
 this head were so strong, that we should never
 have thought of carrying the gospel to the Gen-
 tiles if God had not particularly charged us to
 do it. But blessed be God that the charge has
 been given and the embassy sent; and most
 welcome should it be to all that receive it, as it*

ROMANS x. 14.

HOW then shall
 they call on him
 in whom they have
 not believed? and
 how shall they be-
 lieve in him of whom
 they have not heard?
 and how shall they
 hear without a
 preacher?

15 And how shall
 they preach except
 they be sent? as it is

written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

is written and described in that lively prophecy,^a (Isa. lii. 7, 8.) "O how beautiful are the feet, the very footsteps, of those who bring the good tidings of peace, who bring the good tidings of those various good things which God hath now been pleased to bestow on his church. It is pleasant to see and hear the messengers, pleasant to view the very tract of ground over which they have passed on the mountains which surround Jerusalem."^b

SECT. XXIII.
Rom. x. 15.

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

But, alas, all have not obeyed the gospel, glorious as its tidings are, nor given it that cordial reception which its happy contents might well have demanded. And they who are well acquainted with the oracles of the Old Testament, and study them impartially, will not be surprised at it: For Esaias saith, in that very context which contains so many illustrious testimonies to the cause in which we are engaged, (Isa. liii. 1.) "Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed

17 So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

"and made bare?" Faith indeed [cometh] by 17 hearing, and hearing in the case now before us by the word, the express command of God, to make the declaration.^c It is therefore our duty to deliver the message wheresoever we come, whether to Jews or Gentiles, in humble hope that some will believe, though we have so much reason to fear that many will reject it.

18 But Isay, Have This is our duty, but a duty which we cannot 18

^a In that lively prophecy.] Most commentators think that the lii. chapter of Isaiah is to be explained as a prophecy of the return of the Jews from Babylon, and that the text here quoted refers to the joyful welcome that should be given to the messengers who brought the first tidings of Cyrus's decree for their dismissal. And if it were so, the apostle might very justly infer from thence the superior joy with which the messengers of the gospel should be received. But I think a great deal may be said to show it probable that the context in question has in its original sense a farther reference. Compare Isa. li. 4—6. But not judging it necessary in the paraphrase to build upon it as an argument, I shall not by any means discuss the matter here.

^b The very footsteps.] L'Enfant thinks the feet are put for the arrival. Compare

Gen. xxv. 30, in the original. But I think the turn given in the paraphrase illustrates it much better. Bos observes, that in Sophocles the hands and feet of those who come upon a kind design are represented as beautiful to those who received benefit by their arrival.

^c Faith indeed cometh.] Mr. L'Enfant would transpose the 16th and 17th verses; and it is certain, as any one may easily perceive, that the connection of all from the 15th to the 18th would in that view be clearer; but as no copies warrant it, I think it is by no means to be presumed upon. I have therefore translated *apa*, which is often a sort of an expletive, by the word *indeed*, which throws this verse into some kind of connection with the next, and if referred to *αλλα* there, will, I hope, be thought agreeable enough to the Greek idiom.

SECT.
XXIII.Rom.
x. 18.

perform without some discouragements; yet I may confidently say it hath in the main been practised; and I may appeal to what you at Rome knew of the matter, in consequence of your correspondence with all parts of the Empire. *Have they not heard of the gospel all abroad, so that I may take up the words of David (Psal. xix. 4.) when describing the course of the celestial luminaries, and apply them to the zeal, and in some measure to the success, with which the missionaries of this holy religion have exerted themselves, assisted by the blessed Spirit of God, and animated by the hope of that glorious immortality to which they have taught others to aspire? Of them may I say, that "verily their voice is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world:" many distant nations have already heard these glad tidings, which God will at length render universal. (Col. i. 6, 23.)*

19 *But I may farther say, Hath not Israel known, or had an opportunity not only of knowing that the gospel should be preached, but that it should be carried to the Gentiles too? For first Moses saith, in that celebrated song of his which the children in all generations were to learn, (Deut. xxxii. 21.) "I will raise your jealousy by [those "who were] not a nation, [and] your anger with "a foolish people;" which may well be understood as ultimately referring to this great*

20 *scheme. And Isaiah hath the boldness to say, in a context where so many things evidently refer to the gospel, (Isa. lxxv. 1, 2.) "I was "found of them that sought me not; I was made "manifest to them that inquired not for me, "nor discovered any concern to be informed*

21 *"of my nature or my will:" Whereas, invidious as he knew it would be to a nation so impatient of rebuke, with relation to Israel he saith in the very next verse, "All the day long "have I stretched out mine hands in the most "importunate and affectionate addresses to a "disobedient and gainsaying people, who are "continually objecting and cavilling; whom no "persuasion can win to regard their own happiness, so as to be willing to admit the evidence of truth and the counsels of wisdom."*

they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.

20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

It appears then, on the whole, that since the prophets so plainly foretold that the Gentiles should be called and the Jews rejected, it is no way unbecoming my character as a messenger from God, and a friend to the Jewish nation, to assert the same, and to act upon it.

SECT.
XXIII.
Rom.
x. 21.

IMPROVEMENT.

BLESSED be God for the preaching of the gospel, so absolute-Ver. 14.
ly necessary to that faith without which we can have no well-grounded hope of salvation. Blessed be God therefore for the 15 mission of his ministers, and for his abundant goodness in sending them to us sinners of the Gentiles. Let us give them a respectful and attentive hearing, and say, *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that preach salvation, that publish peace!* And let us take great care that we do not only speak respectfully of their doctrine, but that we comply with the purposes of their embassy.

It is matter of continual joy to reflect, not only that God hath afforded to all men such means of attaining divine knowledge by the intimations of it which he hath given in the con-18stitutions of the heavenly bodies, and in the whole frame of visible nature, but also that he hath sent the express messages of grace to so many millions in the extensive publication of his gospel. Let us rejoice in the spread it hath already had, and let us earnestly and daily pray that the voice of those divine messengers that proclaim it may go forth unto all the earth, and their words reach, in a literal sense, to the remotest ends of our habitable world. Let us pray that wherever the word of God hath a free course, it may be more abundantly glorified, and that its ministers may not have so much reason to say, *Who 16, 21 hath believed our report?* and to complain of *stretching out their hands all the day long to a disobedient and gainsaying people.* Exert, O Lord God, thine almighty arm, make it bare in the sight of all the nations! Shed abroad thy saving influences on the hearts of multitudes, that they may believe and turn unto the Lord! May the great Saviour of his Israel be found of those 20 that seek him not; and by the surprising condescensions of his grace may he manifest himself to those that do not inquire after him! And may his ancient people not only be provoked to 19 anger, but awakened to emulation too, and put in their claim for those blessings which God has by his Son vouchsafed to offer to all the Gentiles!

S E C T. XXIV.

The apostle shows that though the rejection of Israel be for the present general, according to their own prophecies, and attended with astonishing blindness and obstinacy, yet it is not total, there being still a number of happy believers among them. Rom. xi. 1—10.

ROMANS XI. 1.

SECT.
XXIV.

Rom
xi. 1.

WE have seen, my brethren, how the perverseness of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles hath been foretold ; but *do I say then, that God hath entirely rejected his whole people so as to have mercy on none of them ? God forbid !* I should then pronounce a sentence of reprobation upon myself ; *for I also am an Israelite, as it is well known I am of the seed of Abraham, and can trace my genealogy, and show particularly that I am [of] the tribe of Benjamin.* No: blessed be his name *God hath not rejected those of his people whom he foreknew ; but hath still, as in the most degenerate ages, a seed whom he hath chosen to faith and salvation. Know you not what the scripture saith to this purpose in the story of Elijah ? (Compare 1 Kings xix. 14.) when he pleads with God against Israel, saying, “ Lord, they “ have cruelly slain all thy faithful prophets, “ and they have digged up the very foundations “ of thine altars ;^a and I am left alone, after “ the slaughter of all thine other servants: and “ they seek my life too, and send murderers in “ pursuit of me from place to place, that there “ may not be one worshipper of Jehovah left “ in their whole land.” But recollect, what says the Divine Oracle to him in answer to this doleful complaint ? “ I have reserved unto myself, “ by my grace and providence, no less than “ seven thousand men who have not bowed the “ knee before the image of Baal, nor complied*

ROMANS XI. 1.

I SAY then, Hath God cast away his people ? God forbid ! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias ? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars ; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

4 But what saith the answer of God unto him ? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

^a *Digged up thine altars.] It seems from hence, that though, according to the law, there was only one altar for sacrifice, and that in the place where God had fixed his peculiar residence ; yet, by some special dispensation,*

pious persons in the ten tribes built altars elsewhere. It is well known, at least, that Samuel and Elijah had done it ; and perhaps they were either kept up, or others raised on the same spots of ground.

5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

“with any of those idolatrous rites which are established by these iniquitous laws.” And so also in the present time, bad as this generation of Israelites is, and sure they were never worse, yet there is a remnant who continue faithful to God, according to the free election of his grace, whereby God hath reserved them to himself, and made them to differ from others.^b

SECT.
XXIV.
Rom.
xi. 5.

6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.

And by the way, I cannot forbear observing and entreating you to reflect, that if it be, as I have said, according to the election of grace, then [it is] no more, as some have maintained, of works, whether of the Mosaic or any other law; else grace is no longer grace,^c if the glory of our acceptance with God is not on the whole to be ascribed to that. But on the other side, if [it be] of works, then it is no more of grace, else work is no longer work. There is something so absolutely inconsistent between being saved by grace and by works, that if you lay down either, you do of necessity exclude the other from being the cause of it.

7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded:

But to return from this short digression: What then do we conclude? What but this, that Israel hath not obtained that justification and righteousness which it has sought, nor retained those particular privileges of the church of God which they pretend entirely to engross: but the election, the chosen remnant, hath obtained it, having been by divine grace engaged to embrace the gospel; whereas the rest were blinded by their own fatal prejudices, to which God hath in righteous judgment given them up:

8 According as it is written, God hath

According as it is written, (Isa. xxix. 10. Com-8

^b The election of grace.] Some explain this of their having chosen grace, that is, the gospel; but that turn is very unnatural, and neither suits the phrase nor the connection with the former clause or with the next verse, in which the apostle comments on his own words.

^c Else grace is no longer grace, &c.] Some interpret this, “The gospel would not deserve the name of grace, if the observation of the Mosaic law were to be taken in as a part of the terms of our acceptance with God.” But this would have been a strange position. Who that in any degree knew the terrors of

God’s anger, would not most gladly have accepted of the full pardon the gospel offers, on much more rigorous terms than obedience to the Mosaic ritual? The meaning rather seems to be, “What is given to works is the payment of a debt, whereas the notion of grace implies an unmerited favour; so that the same benefit cannot, at the same time, be derived from both.” This seems to be a reflection on the riches of divine grace which the apostle makes by the way, and which well agrees with the fulness of his heart on this subject.

SECT. pare Deut. xxix. 4. and Isa. vi. 10,) *God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear.* given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day.

Rom.
xi. 8.

He threatened, you see, to punish their perverseness when it should come to a certain degree, by abandoning them to increasing stupidity and obstinacy, and he hath done it even *unto this day*; for their blindness continues notwithstanding all the extraordinary things which have been done, even in our own age of wonders, for 9 their conviction. *And this is agreeable to what David hath said, in that prophetic imprecation which is applicable to them as well as to Judas, (Psal. lxxix. 22, 23; compare Acts i. 20,) Let all the blessings of their most plentiful table become a snare to them, and that which should, according to its original use and intention, have been for their welfare, a trap. Thus the gospel, which should have been the means of their salvation, is now become an instrument of ruin and destruction to them, and an occasion of stumbling in the most fatal manner. And it must be acknowledged to be a just recompence for their wickedness, that the best of blessings should thus be turned into a curse to them that so ungratefully rejected and despised it. And in 10 them the following words are also fulfilled: Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and keep their back continually bent down under a perpetual weight of sorrows which they may not be able to support, and which may be a just punishment upon them for having rejected so easy a yoke. (Compare Lev. xxvi. 13.)*

9 And David saith, Let their tables be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompence unto them.

10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 3, 4. LET us learn from the answer of God to Elijah, when he thought himself left alone, and knew nothing of the seven thousand which God had reserved, to encourage ourselves in a secret hope that there may be much more goodness in the world than we are particularly aware of. The numbers of those that constitute the invisible church are unknown to us, but they are known to God. They are all registered in the book of his remembrance, as they are all reserved unto himself by his grace; nor shall *his people whom he hath foreknown be cast away*. May 2 we be of that blessed number; and may the degeneracy which we see so prevalent around us, animate us to a holy zeal to

hold fast our own integrity; yea, to seize the occasion of ap-
 proving it in a more acceptable manner, from a circumstance, SECT. XXIV.
 in every other view, greatly to be lamented.

Let us often reflect upon this great and important truth so
 frequently inculcated upon us in the word of God, that it is to Ver. 6.
 his grace, and not to any works of our own, that we are to as-
 cribe our acceptance with him. And let the ministers of Christ
 be ready, after the example of the apostle, sometimes to turn
 as it were out of the way, to dwell a little on a thought at
 once so humbling and so reviving.

We see the miserable circumstances of God's ancient Israel, 7, 8
 given up to a spirit of slumber, to blind eyes and to deaf ears.
 Oh let us take heed that we do not imitate their obstinacy and
 folly, lest God make our own wickedness our destruction, lest
 he send a curse upon us, and curse our blessings, so that our table 9
 should become a snare to us, our temporal enjoyments, or our spi-
 ritual privileges! Lord, let us often say, Give us any plague ra-
 ther than the plague of the heart; and bow down our backs under 10
 any load of affliction rather than that which shall at last crush
 those who have refused to accept of thy gospel, and to take up-
 on their shoulders the light burden which a gracious Saviour
 would lay upon them.

SECT. XXV.

*The apostle shows in this and the next section that the rejection of Israel
 is not final; but that the time shall come when, to the unspeakable joy
 of the Christian world, the Jewish nation shall be brought into the
 church of Christ. Rom. xi. 11—24.*

ROMANS XI. 11.

I SAY then, have
 they stumbled that
 they should fall?
 God forbid! but ra-
 ther through their fall
 salvation is come un-
 to the Gentiles, for
 to provoke them to
 jealousy.

ROMANS XI. 11.

I HAVE asserted above, the rejection of the SECT. XXV.
 Jewish nation in general; yet I have observed
 that it is not total, so that none of them should
 remain objects of mercy. And do I assert it to
 be final? *Do I then say, they have so stumbled*
as that, as a nation, they should fall into irrevoc-
able ruin, and never more be owned by God,
as his people? God forbid! but I assert, that by
this fall of theirs salvation [is] at the present
[come] to the Gentiles; the future consequence
of which shall be to provoke them to a holy emu-
lation of sharing the blessings and benefits to be
expected from their own Messiah, when they
shall see so many heathen nations enjoy them.

Rom. xi. 11.

12 Now if the fall *But these should be no unwelcome tidings to 12*
 you Gentiles: for *if their fall [be] by accident*

SECT. XXV. *the riches of the world, and their diminution the riches of the Gentiles, by scattering the preachers of the gospel among them, by proving our veracity and integrity, and in some measure exciting compassion too; though their rejecting us, in itself considered, might rather appear as an argument against it; how much more shall the bringing in their whole fulness, that is, the whole body of the Jewish nation, be a means of propagating the gospel much farther, and recovering multitudes by whom it hath been rejected, from their scepticism and infidelity, when so great an event appears in accomplish-*

of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?

13 *ment of its known predictions?^a For I now speak to you Gentiles, and I do it with tenderness and respect, as I am, by a special designation of Providence, the apostle of the Gentiles; I therein extol my office, and esteem it the most signal*
 14 *honour of my life to be employed in it. And while I thus address you, it is also with a desire that I may, if possible, excite to emulation [them who are] my brethren according to the flesh, and who are dear to me as the members of my own body; that if I may not prevail for the recovery of their nation in general, I may at least save some of them, while I speak of those kind purposes which I assuredly know God will accomplish towards the whole Jewish people in his appointed time. And this thought gives new spirit to my address to you, as I hope it may not only*

13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are my flesh*, and might save some of them.

^a Accomplishment of its known predictions.] So many of the prophecies of the Old Testament so evidently refer to the reduction of the Jews into their own land as the people of the Messiah, that I can by no means doubt of the certainty of that event. Compare Isa. xxvii. 12, 13; Ezek. xi. 17—21; chap. xx. 34—44; chap. xxxiv. 13, 14; chap. xxxv. 25—29; chap. xxxvi. 24—28; chap. xxxvii. 21—28; Amos ix. 14, 15; Obad. ver. 17; Mic. vii. 14, 15; Zech. xiv. 10, 11. And the wonderful preservation of them as a distinct people thus far, not only leaves a possibility of this great event, but encourages the hope of it. When it shall be accomplished, it will be so unparalleled as necessarily to excite a general attention, and to fix upon men's minds such an almost irresistible demonstration, both of the Old and New

Testament revelation, as will probably captivate the minds of many thousands of deists in countries professedly Christian, (of which, under such corrupt establishments as generally prevail, there will of course be increasing multitudes;) nor will this only captivate their understanding, but will have the greatest tendency to awaken a sense of true religion in their hearts; and this will be a means of propagating the gospel with an amazing velocity in Pagan and Mahometan countries; which probably had been evangelized long ago, had genuine Christianity prevailed in those who have made a profession, and God knows, for the most part, a very scandalous profession, of its forms.—The 15th verse has so natural a connection with the 12th, that Elsner includes the 13th and 14th in a parenthesis.

tend to your edification and salvation, but also to theirs.^b

SECT.
XXV.

15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?

In like manner, when I wish their recovery, it is not for their sakes alone, but also with respect to those happy consequences which I know it will have upon the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles. For, as I hinted above, if their rejection [were] the reconciliation of so great a part of the heathen world to God, as it was the means of sending the gospel of peace among them; what [will] the reception [of them be] but life from the dead? What joy will it necessarily give, and what a general spread of the gospel will it naturally produce!

Rom.
ix. 15.

16 For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

And this blessed event we may assuredly expect; for if the first-fruits [be] holy, so [is] the lump. The consecration of them was looked upon as in effect the consecration of all. And so would I look upon the conversion of some few of the Jewish nation as an earnest of the conversion of all the rest. And so much the rather, when I consider how eminently dear to God those pious patriarchs were from whom they have descended: for if the root [be] holy, the branches [are likewise] so, and will surely at length be regarded as such. And this though

17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree;

some of them be at present in so melancholy a state; for if some of the branches were broken off, and thou, O Gentile, being as it were a scion of a wild olive, were grafted in among them that remained,^c and art with them partaker of, and nourished by, the root and fatness of the good olive, being not only a graft upon another stock, but a meaner graft on a stock originally noble and more excellent; Boast not thyself presumptuously and ungratefully against the natural branches: and if thou boastest, [remember] to thy humiliation [that] thou bearest not the

18 Boast not against the branches: but if thou boast thou bearest not the

^b Also to theirs.] Perhaps we can nowhere find an instance of a more popular and affectionate turn than this, in which the apostle seems to find a reason for his zeal to convert the Gentiles in his love to his own countrymen the Jews.

^c Wild olive grafted in among them.] It is very improper to object that it is unnatural to suppose an ignoble branch grafted on a rich stock; for it was not necessary that the simile taken from inoculation

should hold in all its particulars: and the engagement to humility arises in a considerable degree from the circumstances objected against. Had the scion been nobler than the stock, its dependence on it for life and nourishment would render it unfit that it should boast against it: how much more when the case was the reverse of what in human usage is practised, and the wild olive is ingrafted on the good!

- SECT. root, but the root thee. Thou hast received many benefits from Abraham's seed and the covenant made with him, but they have received none from thee. Wilt thou therefore object and say, "*The natural branches were broken off that I might be grafted in, and therefore we may glory over them as they once did over us?*" Well, take this thought at least along with thee, *they were broken off for their infidelity, and thou hitherto standest in their place through faith. Therefore be not high-minded and arrogant, but fear,*^d lest thou by thy sins forfeit the privileges to which thou art so wonderfully raised. For if God spared not the branches which were according to nature, neither will he by any means spare thee, if thine unbelief make thee, after all thy peculiar obligations, as bad, and in that respect even worse than they.
- Behold therefore, on the whole, a remarkable display of the intermingled goodness and severity of God, and endeavour to improve both well. Towards them that fell thou indeed seest a memorable instance of his severity; but to thee a display of gentleness and goodness, if thou wilt be careful to continue in [his] goodness, and endeavour gratefully and dutifully to improve it; else thou also shalt be cut off, for the blessed God will not bear always to be insulted with the petulancy of sinners. And I would have you farther to consider, as a motive to think of the Jews with respect rather than contempt, that *they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, shall be grafted on again, and restored to their former privileges: For it is certain God is able again to ingraft them; hopeless as their state may seem both with respect to their obstinacy and their misery, his powerful access to their mind can subdue their prejudices against the gospel, as thou mayest easily argue from what thou hast thyself experienced. For if thou wert, as I may properly enough express it, cut off from the olive-tree, which was naturally wild, and, contrary to the course and process*
- 19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.
- 20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded but fear.
- 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.
- 22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell severity, but towards thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.
- 23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.
- 24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree, which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary

^d Be not high-minded, &c.] Archbishop Tillotson well observes that this caution ill suits the claim to infallibility which the modern church of Rome so arrogant-

ly makes, amidst all the absurdities with which her doctrine and her ritual are loaded.

to nature into a good olive-tree; how much more shall these which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive-tree?

of nature, were grafted on the good olive-tree; if thou wert admitted into covenant with God, though descended from parents that were strangers and enemies, *how much more shall they who are the natural [branches,] to whom the promises do originally belong, be grafted on their own olive?* God will not seem to do so wonderful a thing in restoring them to what might seem the privilege of their birth-right and descent, and saving the seed of Abraham his friend, as he hath done in calling you sinners of the Gentiles to participate the blessings of which you had not the least notion, and to which you cannot be supposed to have had any imaginable claim.

SECT.

XXV.

Rom.
xi. 24.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us set ourselves seriously to pause upon the conduct of God towards the Jews and Gentiles in that part of it which the apostle here describes, and rejoice with trembling in it. Let us reflect on the divine severity to them and the divine goodness to us. What immense goodness! that we should be taken from that wretched condition in which we were utterly ignorant of the great Author and end of our being, of the nature of true happiness, and the way of obtaining it, that we and our offspring might be grafted on the good stock, be called to the most important of those privileges and hopes with which the seed of Abraham were honoured and enriched! We partake of the fatness of the good olive, may our fruit abound to the honour of God, to the benefit of mankind! Ver. 22.

Let us cherish the most benevolent and tender disposition towards the house of Israel, to whose spiritual privileges we are raised; and let us earnestly pray that they may be awakened to emulation, especially as their *fulness is to be the riches of the Gentiles, and the receiving them again as life from the dead to the languishing and decaying church.* 11

In the mean time, as the gospel comes to us in so awful a manner vindicated from the contempt of former despisers, let us solemnly charge upon our souls this lesson of holy caution, these salutary words, (Oh that they may be continually present to our thoughts!) *Be not high-minded but fear.* Whatever our privileges whatever our experiences are, whatever our confidence may be, let us dwell upon the thought; for there is no Christian upon earth that hath not reason to fear in proportion to the degree in which he feels his thoughts towering on high, and grows into any conceit of himself. Daily let us recollect what we were in 20

SECT. our natural estate; and what, with all our improvements and attainments, we should immediately be if God should forsake us.

XXV. Let us pray therefore that we may continue in God's goodness; Ver. 22. and whoever may appear to fall from it, let us not glory but rather mourn over them, and pray for their recovery and salvation to that God who is able to recover from the most obstinate infidelity and impenitence, and to graft not only on foreign branches, but what may seem yet more wonderful, those that have appeared more than twice dead.

SECT. XXVI.

The apostle farther illustrates the future conversion of the Jews to the gospel; and concludes the argument with observing, that in the mean time their obstinacy is overruled to such happy purposes as make the whole scene a most glorious display of the unsearchable wisdom of God. Rom. xi. 25, to the end.

ROMANS XI. 25.

SECT.
XXVI.

Rom.
xi. 25.

AND now, my brethren, upon the whole I will conclude what I have to say upon this interesting and affecting subject, which I have indeed enlarged upon pretty copiously; for it lies with great weight upon my heart. And therefore *I would not have you to be ignorant of this material circumstance relating to the great mystery in the dispensation before us, which, on the first views of it, may appear very unaccountable; lest you should have too high an opinion of yourselves, when you see the Jews rejected for their fatal error. I would not, I say, have you ignorant of this, that the lamentable blindness and infatuation we have been speaking of is in part happened unto Israel, and has spread itself over by far the greatest part of the Jewish people, not that they may utterly perish and be for ever cut off, but that they may continue in this humble and rejected state till a certain period arrive, when the fulness of the Gentiles, the appointed harvest of them, shall be brought in,*^a

ROMANS XI. 25.

FOR I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits;) that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

^a *Till the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, &c.*] It is well remarked by my late learned, pious, and candid friend Dr. William Harris, that as this epistle was written about the year 57, that is, long after the most remarkable conversion

of the Jews by the first preaching of the apostles, and after Paul had been about 30 years engaged in his work, it appears that the prophecies relating to the calling of the Jews were not accomplished then, and consequently are not yet accomplish-

26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.

and incorporated with those already associated to the church of Christ. And so, when this happy season marked out in the divine decrees, though to us unknown, shall be come, that blessed event shall make way for it, and all the seed of Israel shall, by a general conversion, be saved from its dispersion and misery, and fixed in a state of covenant-favour and acceptance with God again: *As it is written, (Isa. lix. 20.) a Deliverer shall come out of Sion, and he shall turn away the punishment of their former impiety from Jacob, when he hath brought them to true repentance.*^b As it is added, *And this* 27 *[is] my covenant which I shall make with them when I shall take away their sins; that is, when their sins as a nation are remitted, it shall be to bring them again into covenant with myself.*

And thus, on the whole, *with respect to the gos-* 28 *pel [they are] indeed regarded as enemies for your sakes; that is, for their obstinate rejecting the gospel, God hath rejected them in favour of you, and that he might receive you into his church as in their stead:*^c *but as for the election, that remnant of them which God hath graciously chosen to be subdued by the grace of the gospel, [they are] beloved for their fathers' sakes.* God's gracious regard to the memory of

ed. Harris's Practical Discourses on the Messiah, p. 91. Dr. Whitby very justly observes that there is a *double harvest* of the Gentiles spoken of by Paul in this chapter; the first, called *their riches*, verse 12, as consisting in the preaching the gospel to all nations, whereby indeed they were happily enriched with divine knowledge and grace; the second, *the bringing in their fulness*, which expresses a more glorious conversion of many to the true faith of Christians in the latter age of the world, which is to be occasioned by the conversion of the Jews. Whit. in loc. This answers Orobio's objection, (Limb. Collat. p. 94.) that Paul's account is contrary to the prophecies of the Old Testament, which represent the recovery of the Gentile nations as consequent on the redemption of Israel.

^b *As it is written, Isa. lix. 20, &c.]* This text, as it stands in the Hebrew, seems different from the sense in which it is here quoted, *A deliverer shall come—to those that turn from iniquity.* But if

Christ be here foretold as *a deliverer to the Jews*, it is all that the apostle's purpose requires. Yet it is observable the LXX. agrees better with the words of the quotation, as it possibly might with the original reading: and it is certain that the general tenor of God's covenant with Israel gave no hope of deliverance, after rejection and chastisement, but in a way of repentance and reformation. Compare Lev. xxvi. 39—45; Deut. xxx. 1—10.

^c *Enemies for your sakes.]* The most natural sense of these words, were they considered alone, might seem, that the calling the Gentiles prejudiced the Jews against the gospel; but as they generally rejected it before the Gentiles were called, I, on the whole, prefer the sense given in the paraphrase. The different sense of *δια* here supposed, may seem a strong objection against it; but if *δια* be rendered *with a regard to*, it may be applicable to both.

SECT.
XXVI.
Rom.
xi. 26.

SECT. their pious ancestors engages him to take care

XXVI. that some of their seed shall always continue in

covenant with him, till at length he recover

Rom. them as a nation, and astonish the world with

xi. 28. 29 their unequalled glory and felicity. And this

shall most assuredly be, *for the gifts and calling*

of God [are] not to be repented of:^d he doth

not resume the gifts he hath once bestowed, nor

retract the calls he hath once given, but will

maintain a remembrance of them, and act in

perfect harmony with them, in all his dispen-

sations; according to that wise plan which he

hath laid in his eternal counsels, and from which

no unforeseen contingency can ever cause him

to vary.

30 *As then ye Gentiles were once, and for a long*

time, disobedient to God, and buried in igno-

rance and superstition, but now have obtained

mercy by means of their disobedience, God hav-

ing taken you to be his people instead of the

31 *Jews: So they also having been disobedient to*

the gospel, and the more prejudiced against it

on occasion of your admittance to such distin-

guishing mercy, yet shall not be utterly and

finally ruined, but shall also, to the glory of

divine grace, at length themselves obtain the

32 *mercy they have envied you. And thus the di-*

vine goodness is illustrated even by that which

might seem most contrary to it: for it appears

that God hath for a certain time shut up all

under obstinacy and disobedience,^e *suffering each*

in their turn to revolt, under different degrees

of light, that he might in a more remarkable

manner have mercy on all, and glorify the riches

29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:

31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.

32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

^d *Not to be repented of.*] Elsner has produced many passages from approved Greek classics, in which the word ἀμεταμέλητος is used exactly in this sense; and has collected, in his curious note on this verse, many testimonies of Pagan authors relating to the Divine perfections, which might have taught some Christian divines to speak more honourably of them than they do in some of their writings.

^e *Shut up all under disobedience, &c.*] It is of great importance to observe that this refers to different periods. First, God suffered the Gentiles, in the early ages of the world, to revolt, and then

took the Abrahamic family as a peculiar seed to himself, and bestowed extraordinary favours upon them. Afterwards he permitted them, by unbelief and disobedience, to fall, and took in the Gentiles on their believing; and he did even this with an intent to make that very mercy to the Gentiles a means of provoking the Jews to jealousy, and so bring them to faith by that which had at first been an offence in the way to it. This was truly a mystery in the Divine conduct, which the apostle most rationally as well as respectfully adores, in the concluding words of the chapter.

of his grace in favours bestowed on those who evidently appeared so undeserving.

SECT.
XXVI.

33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

And now to conclude this article: Who in the view of such a series of events must not cry out, *O the awful and unfathomable depths of the riches, and wisdom, and knowledge of God!* How rich are the treasures of his mercy, how deep the contrivances of his wisdom, how boundless the stretch of his knowledge! *How unsearchable, and yet how unquestionable, [are] his judgments! and his ways such as cannot be traced out!*

Rom.
xi. 33.

34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

For who hath completely known the mind of the 34

35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

Lord in these things, or who hath been his counsellor in forming the plan of them? Who, 35

36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

whether Jew or Greek, can pretend that he hath first given any thing to him, or conferred any obligation upon him? Let him make out the claim, and we may answer for it, that it shall be exactly repaid him again. For, on the 36

whole, of him as the original Author, and through him as the gracious Preserver, and for him as the ultimate end, [are] all things.¹

To him therefore [be] glory for ever and ever; and let all the creation join their utmost force to advance it to the highest degrees, and unite their voices in saying Amen.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET our whole souls be engaged to glorify this great and blessed God, from whom and through whom we and all the creatures exist. Oh that it may be our eternal employment to render adoration, and blessing, and glory to him! to him whose counsels none can trace; to him who hath prevented us all with the blessings of his goodness: so that far from being able to confer any obligation on him for which we should pretend to demand a recompence, on the contrary, we must own, that the more we are enabled and animated to do for him, the more indeed are we obliged to him. We cannot pretend to have known the mind of the Lord in all its extent, or to have been admitted into his secret counsels. He is continually doing marvellous things which we know not; yet surely we know enough to admire and adore: Ver. 36.

¹ Of him, through him, for him, &c.] Antoninus, speaking of Nature, that is, of God, has an expression which one would

imagine he had borrowed from this of Paul, *ἐκ σε πάντα, ἐν σοὶ πάντα, εἰς σε πάντα*, all things are of thee, in thee, and to thee.

SECT. We know enough to cry out in raptures of delightful surprise,

XXVI. *O the depths of the riches both of his wisdom and goodness!*

Ver. 33.

One instance, though but one of many, we have here before us, in his mysterious conduct towards Jews and Gentiles; in which occurrences that seem the most unaccountable, and indeed the most lamentable, are overruled by God to answer most benevolent purposes. That the sin of the Jews should be the salvation of the Gentiles, and yet the mercy shown to the Gentiles in its consequences the salvation of the Jews, and so both should be concluded under sin, that God might more illustriously have mercy on both!

26 Oh that the blessed time were come when all Israel shall be saved; when the Deliverer, who is long since come out of Sion, shall turn away iniquity from Jacob; and the fulness of the Gentiles come in, so that from the rising to the going down of the sun the Lord shall be one and his name one! Our faith waits the glorious event, and may perhaps wait it even to the end of life.

But a generation to be born shall see it; *for the gifts and callings of God are without repentance.* Let our assured confidence in the divine promise travel on, as it were, to the accomplishment, over mountains of difficulty that may lie in our way; and let our hearts be cheered with this happy prospect, under all the grief which they feel when we see how few now believe the report of the gospel, and to how few God hath revealed his arm.

While the glorious expected event is delayed, let us add our fervent intercessions with God to those prayers by which the church has in every age been endeavouring to hasten it on. They are all written in the book of God's remembrance, and shall all be reviewed and answered in their season. Let us in the mean time comfort ourselves with this reviving thought, that the covenant which God will make with Israel in that day is in the main the same he has made with us, to take away sin. Eased of such an insupportable burden, that would sink us into final ruin and despair, let us bear up cheerfully against all discouragements, and glory in the gospel, which brings us this invaluable blessing, how long and how generally soever it may be *to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness.*

SECT. XXVII.

The apostle enters on a series of most admirable practical exhortations and directions, in which he labours to persuade Christians to act in a manner worthy of that gospel the excellency of which he had been illustrating. And here particularly urges an entire consecration to God, and a care to glorify him in their respective stations, by a faithful improvement of their various talents. Rom. xii. 1—11.

ROMANS XII. 1.

I BESEECH you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

ROMANS XII. 1.

HAVING thus dispatched what I proposed in the argumentative part of the epistle, and suggested a variety of considerations which may convince you of the great excellency of the gospel, and the singular favour which God has shown to those Gentiles whom he hath called into the Christian church, and to that remnant of the Jews who are kept in so happy a relation to them, while the bulk of their nation are fallen into a state of rejection; let me now endeavour to animate you all to behave in a suitable manner. *I entreat you therefore,^a my dear brethren, partakers with me in this holy calling, by all the tender mercies of our most compassionate God, that instead of the animal victims whose slaughtered bodies you have been accustomed to offer, either to the true God or to idols, you would now present, as it were, at his spiritual altar, your own bodies, as a living sacrifice, holy and well pleasing to God.* Let all the members of your bodies and all the faculties of your souls,^b being sanctified and animated by divine grace, be employed in the service of him to whom you are under such immense obligations. This he requires of you [*as*] *your rational service*; and it will be much more acceptable to him than any ceremonial forms, though most exactly prescribed in a ritual of his

SECT.
XXVII.

Rom.
xii. 1.

^a *Entreat you therefore.*] Some apply this to the Gentiles; and as most of the members of the church at Rome were originally so, it is reasonable to believe the apostle had them principally in view; but not excluding the converted Jews, who, as he had just before expressed it, remained as a remnant according to the election of grace, when the rest were hardened, and therefore had surely reason to acknowledge the tender mercies of God to them, and were under strong obligations to devote themselves to him. I have accordingly in the paraphrase applied it to both.

^b *Bodies and souls.*] The body is here by a usual figure put for the whole person; nor can the soul be now presented to God otherwise than as dwelling in the body, or truly consecrated to him, unless the body be employed in his service; nor, on the other hand, can the body be presented as a living sacrifice, otherwise than as actuated and animated by the soul.—For the propriety of the word *παρὰ*, which properly signifies *placing the victim before the altar*, see Elsner in loc.

SECT. own appointment. *And as you desire to engage his approbation and favour, be not, in the general course of your temper and actions, conformed to the sentiments and customs of this vain and sinful world, but rather be ye transformed in the renewing of your mind: endeavour to become new creatures, contracting new habits, and engaging in new pursuits, under the influence of the Divine Spirit on your hearts; that you may not only be speculatively acquainted with the doctrines, precepts, and design of the gospel, but may experimentally know that will of God [which is] in itself so excellently good, and which, as it is most acceptable to him, has the most apparent tendency to purify and perfect our natures.^c*

Rom.
xii. 2.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

- 3 *And I particularly say, and give it in charge,^d according to that grace which is given to me as an inspired apostle, to every one that is among you, as if personally named, to take the greatest heed that he be not exalted into spiritual pride by the gifts and privileges which God hath conferred upon you. I charge each not to arrogate [to himself] above what he ought to think,^e but that he think of himself with modesty, sobriety, and humility; according to the measure of that faith, and in correspondent proportion to those gifts, which God hath distributed to every man among you. And surely when you consider it is God who hath given all, there will appear little reason to magnify yourselves on any distinguishing share of his bounty which any one may have received. Especially when you remember, that this distribution is made, not only or chiefly for your own sake, but out of regard to the good of the whole: For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same use, but each its proper function and service appointed by the wise*
- 5 *Former and gracious Preserver of the whole: So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and every*

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every

^c Good, acceptable, and perfect.] L'Enfant explains each of these as opposed to the Jewish ritual: this Christian sacrifice being more excellent in itself, Ezek. xv. 25; more pleasing to God, Psal. xl. 7, 8; and tending more to make us perfect, Heb. vii. 19, I understand it as referring to all the preceptive part of Christianity, the excellency of which they will best

understand who set themselves most exactly to practise upon it.

^d Say, and give it in charge.] So *ἀγγελλν* signifies, Acts xv. 24. See Raphael. Annot. ex Herodot. in loc.

^e Not to arrogate, &c.] Raphaelius, Annot. ex Herod. in loc. has shown that *ὁμωροῦν* has properly this signification.

one members one of another.

one members of each other; we should therefore endeavour each of us to know his own place and condition, and mutually to make our various capacities as serviceable as we can.

SECT. XXVII.
Rom. xii. 5.

6 Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith:

Having therefore gifts, all proceeding from God, the great fountain of every good thing, and different according to the diversity of the grace that given unto us: whether [it be] prophecy, as enabling us to foretell future events, or to make discourses for the edification and direction of the church, [let us be employed in it] according to the degree of our gift, which is in proportion to the degree of faith that is respec-

7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching;

tively in us:^f Or [having] the office of ministry, as deacons, let a man employ himself actively and faithfully in his ministration:^g or if he be an instructor of catechumens, who are to be fitted for the communion of the church, let him continue humbly, tenderly, and patiently in the work of teaching: Or if he be an exhorter, whose peculiar business it is to urge Christians to duty, or to comfort them in the discharge of it, let him continue in his exhortation: he that giveth any thing to a charitable use, [let him do it] with true simplicity and unfeigned liberality of heart, neither seeking the applause of men nor any other sinister end which he could desire to conceal: he that presideth in the distribution of charities so collected, let him do it with diligence;^h that he may know

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence;

^f According to the proportion of faith.] Many interpret this, "Do it according to the general scheme of Divine revelation, not setting up any novel interpretation of scripture injurious to it." But Raphelius (Annot. ex Xen. in loc.) objects, that λογος, not αναλογια, would be the proper word to express that. Dr. Sam. Clarke (Posthum. Sermon. Vol. I. p. 6,) by faith understands the trust reposed in them, or the nature and use of the gift they had; which is a very unusual sense of the word πισις. The Rhemish Jesuits suppose it was a confession or summary of faith, drawn up by all the apostles in conjunction: to which they refer Rom. vi. 17; chap. xvi. 17; 1 Tim. vi. 20; Gal. i. 6; Acts xv. 6, none of which texts seem to imply any thing like it; nor is it pretended that such a creed was ever quoted in antiquity by the name of αναλογια πισιως, or indeed, that I

can find, by any other. If we suppose the prophetic gift to be given in proportion to the exercise of faith, that is, of dependence on God when he signified a disposition in general to impart it, we have, I think, the clearest explanation the phrase will admit. See Vol. II. p. 311, note ^b on Mark xi. 29.

^g Employ himself in ministration.] It seems the word εγω is understood. Compare 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.—The word διακονα properly signifies the ministration of a deacon, and so interpreted gives the distinctest sense.

^h He that presideth, with diligence.] In this and the following clause, I follow the interpretation of Lord Barrington, (Misc. Sacra, Vol. I. p. 77—80.) and refer to him for the reasons which I think sufficient to justify it, only mentioning the application of the word προσαλις in the same sense to Phœbe, Rom. xvi. 2, who

SECT. the case proposed, and that *he* may see that he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.
 XXVII. nothing be wanting to make the charity as effect-

Rom.
 xii. 8.

tual as possible; and as for him *that showeth mercy*, that is, who has the care of those who on account of peculiarly grievous calamities are the objects of particular compassion, let him do it *with* an obliging *cheerfulness* of temper, cautiously guarding against any disgust at what may seem mean and disagreeable in the offices which must necessarily be performed for such.

9 On the whole, [*let*] *love* [*be*] *undissembled*, and all your expressions of mutual friendship as free as possible from base flattery and from vain compliment. *Abhor that which is evil*, in every instance, and *adhere resolutely to that which is good*. Practise benevolence in all its branches, and every other virtue, with the greatest determination and perseverance of mind, whatever

9 *Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.*

10 discouragements may for the present arise. Do not only abound in the exercises of common humanity, but *in brotherly love*, as Christians, [*be*] *mutually full of tender affection*,ⁱ yea, cultivate those gentle dispositions of mind with delight; and endeavour to think so modestly of yourselves, that you may still be *in honour preferring one another*. Let each in his turn be ready to think better of his brethren than of himself; and so to prevent them in every office of respect,^k and, out of regard to their advantage, to give up with as good a grace as possible any thing in which his own honour or personal interest may be concerned. When you are actually engaged, be *not slothful* and sluggish in

10 *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another:*

11 *Not slothful in*

could not be supposed a ruler in the church. Προισταμεν properly signifies *one who presides*, but in what, the connection must determine. For the extraordinary mercy exercised among the ancient Christians, see Iacian de Morte Pergrin. apud Opera, Vol. II. p. 764. Edit. Salmur. 1619; and Julian. Epist. xlix.

ⁱ *In brotherly love* [*be*] *mutually full of tender affection*.] Perhaps the extremely expressive words of the original, τη φιλαδελφια εις αλληλους φιλοστοργοι, might justly be rendered, *delight in the tenderest fraternal affection to each other*: The word φιλοστοργοι not only signifying a *strong affection*, like that of parent animals to their

offspring, but a *delight in us*, as the ingenious Dr. Balguy has justly observed in his excellent Sermon on this text.

^k Preventing them in every office of respect.] Archbishop Leighton well observes, (Expository Works, Vol. II. p. 329,) that the original words, τη τιμη αλληλους προηγουμενοι, are very expressive, and might literally be rendered, *leading on each other with respect, or in giving honour going before each other*. This I have endeavoured to express in this clause of the paraphrase, but have retained our version, as expressing something of the esteem from which this respectful behaviour should proceed. L'Enfant renders it, *mutually prevent one another with honour*.

business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

the prosecution of your proper *business* in life, but endeavour to rouse your spirits, so that it may be dispatched with vigour and alacrity, and without an unnecessary expense of time. For this purpose be *fervent*, warm, and active in *spirit*: and certainly you will see the greatest obligation and encouragement to be so, when you consider that you are *serving the Lord Jesus Christ*,¹ to whose condescension and love you are infinitely indebted. May you always attend his service with the greatest zeal and delight, and may every action of life be brought into a due subordination to that great end!

SECT. XXVII.

Rom. xii. 11.

IMPROVEMENT.

How rich were a Christian in practical directions for the conduct of life, even if this excellent chapter were his only treasure of this kind! Let such scriptures as these be welcome to us; the scriptures that teach us our duty, as well as those that display before our eyes the richest variety of spiritual privileges. Indeed it is one of our greatest privileges to be taught our duty, if at the same time we are inclined by divine grace to perform it; and if we are not, we have no privileges that will prevent, none that will not increase our ruin.

Wisely does the great apostle lay the foundation of all virtue in a principle of unfeigned piety towards God—in presenting before him our bodies as living sacrifices. How great an honour and happiness will it be to us to do it! That we may be engaged to this, let us often think of his tender mercies, so many and so great; and especially of that most illustrious of all mercies, his redeeming us by the blood of his Son, and calling us into the Christian covenant. Can there be a more reasonable service than this? that we should be consecrated to our Creator, to our Redeemer, to our Sanctifier, to our constant Benefactor, to our supreme end and happiness?—The world indeed neglects him, yea even what is called the Christian world neglects him to such a degree as, if we did not continually see it, we should not suppose it to be possible. But let us not in this instance be

Ver. 1.

¹ *Serving the Lord.*] Several copies for *κρίνω* read *καίρω*, *serving the time*, that is, husbanding your opportunities; and Dr. Mill, trusting chiefly to the authority of Jerom and some other Latin translations, admits this as the true reading. But it is by no means supported by an adequate number of Greek manuscripts; and besides that it would be an unnatural and inelegant expression in that sense, it sinks the noble sense of the commonly

received reading so much, that I could by no means persuade myself to follow it. It is a lively exhortation to Christians to be always serving Christ, and to cultivate the temper which the apostle expresses when he says, *επαύω το ζην Χριστού*, Phil. i. 21, *To me to live is Christ*. It also suggests a motive to enforce the former exhortation; as I have hinted in the paraphrase.

SECT. XXVII. conformed to it. Oh that divine grace may so transform and renew our hearts, that we may not! Nothing but experience can teach us how good, and perfect, and acceptable, the will of God is, and how happy a thing it is to be governed, in every respect, by its unerring declarations.

Ver. 2. Let us remember, that as our sanctification so also our humility and our usefulness are his will; and therefore let us endeavour to conquer every high conceit of ourselves, and every sordid and selfish sentiment. Let us often reflect that we are 7, &c. all members of each other; and being so happily united in Christ, have all but one interest, which is that of the body and of its glorified Head. Whether our station in the church be more public or private, whether our capacities and endowments be more or less distinguished, let us all be faithful, be affectionate, be disinterested, be active, endeavouring to serve Christ, and even the poorest of his people, with simplicity, with diligence, with cheerfulness; preferring others to ourselves; abhorring that love which is spent in hypocritical words and unmeaning forms; cultivating that which gives to the soul tenderness, condescension, 11 and vigour. In one word, let us remember we are serving the Lord, the Lord Christ; and doing all in his name and for his sake, let this add fervour to our spirit, zeal to our diligence, and abasement to our humility: for nothing surely can be so animating, nothing so melting, nothing so humbling, as to recollect, on the one hand, how much we owe him, and, on the other, how little we are able, how much less we are careful, to do for his service.

SECT. XXVIII.

The apostle pursues his practical exhortations, and particularly recommends devotion, patience, hospitality, mutual sympathy, humility, a peaceful temper, and a readiness to forgive injuries. Rom. xii. 12, to the end.

ROMANS XII. 12.

SECT. XXVIII.

Rom. xii. 12.

I HAVE been exhorting you, my brethren, to many Christian duties and graces, and among the rest to the greatest activity and zeal in the service of Christ. Let me exhort you to guard against such a dejection of spirit as would enervate that holy activity and zeal. On the contrary, [be] you that are the servants of Christ always *rejoicing in the hope* of those glorious rewards which your Divine Master, in the riches of his grace, hath set before you, and in that support which he gives you in the way to

ROMANS XII. 12.

REJOICING in hope; patient

in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer:

that eternal glory. And animated by that hope, **SECT. XXVIII.**
be patient in all the tribulation which you may
 bear in his cause, or from his hands, in the wise
 disposals of his gracious providence. And
 while under these pressures, *continuing instant*
in prayer, draw down those necessary supplies
 of his Holy Spirit which may carry you honour-
 ably through all your trials: **Rom. xii. 12.**

13 Distributing to the necessity of the saints; given to hospitality.

communicating to the necessities of the saints, and accounting nothing your own which their relief requires you to furnish out; particularly *pursuing* that *hospitality* which present circumstances so peculiarly demand,^a especially towards those strangers that are exiles or travellers in the cause of Christianity. Stay not till occasions of this kind force themselves upon you, and much less till importunity extort the favour, as it were, against your will; but, like Abraham, look out for proper objects of such a bounty, and follow after them to bring them back to

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

your houses. On the other hand, *bless them* **14**
who are pursuing you with evil intentions, and *persecute you* with the greatest severity for conscience-sake. Wish them well, and pray for their conversion; yea, if they should go on to revile you for all the expressions of your love, go on to *bless, and curse them not*, though provoked by their bitterest imprecations against

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

you. Make it a constant maxim with yourselves **15**
 to maintain a constant sympathy with your brethren of mankind, which may lead you to *rejoice with them that rejoice and to weep with them that weep*; to congratulate others on their felicity, and to bear your part with them in their sorrows, as members of one body, who have all,

16 Be of the same mind one towards

as it were, one common feeling. [*Be*] *entirely* **16**
united in your regards for each other.^b Let

^a *Pursuing hospitality.*] It was the more proper for the apostles so frequently to enforce this duty, as the want of public inns (much less common than among us, though not quite unknown, Luke x. 34, 35.) rendered it difficult for strangers to get accommodations, and as many Christians might be banished their native country for religion, and perhaps laid under a kind of bann of excommunication, both among Jews and Heathens,

which would make it a high crime for any of their former brethren to receive them into their houses.—For the illustration which the paraphrase gives of the energy of this text, I am obliged to Mr. Blackwall, Sacred Class. Vol. I. p. 292.

^b *Be entirely united in your regards for each other.*] This, on the whole, seemed the most proper version of *To αὐτο εἰς ἀλλήλους φρονεῖτε*: and though Dr. Whitby paraphrases it, “Desire the same things

SECT. each condescend to the rest, and agree with another. Mind not
 XXVIII. them as far as he fairly and honourably can; high things, but con-
 and where you must differ, do not by any descend to men of
 Rom. means quarrel about it, but allow the same low estate. Be not
 xii. 16. liberty of sentiments you would claim. *Affect* wise in your own
not high things, either to possess exalted stations conceits.

but rather condescend and accommodate your-
 selves *to men of low rank*; for it is chiefly among
 the poorer part of mankind that the gospel is like
 to prevail: and all Christians ought, in this re-
 spect, to bear the image of their great Master,
 who spent most of his time in conversing with
 such. *Be not so wise in your own conceit* as to
 think yourselves above the divine direction, or
 that of your fellow-christians, in this respect

17 or in any other. *Render to none evil for evil*;
 nor imagine that any man's injurious treatment
 of you will warrant your returning the injury;
 but act in such a cautious and circumspect man-
 ner, that it may evidently appear you *provide*
 against the malignity which will lead many to
 put the worst constructions upon your actions.
 And do only those *things* which may be above
 the need of excuse, and may appear, at the
 first view, fair and *reputable in the sight of all*

18 men. *If it be possible*, and at least to the ut-
 most of your power, as far as it is consistent with
 duty, honour, and conscience, *live peaceably*
with all men; not only your own countrymen
 or fellow-christians, but Jews and Gentiles,
 Greeks and Barbarians.^c

19 Upon the whole, my dearly beloved brethren,
 whatever wrongs you may receive, *revenge not*
yourselves on those that have injured you; *but*
rather yield and give place to the wrath of the
 enemy;^d *for* God hath forbidden us to indulge

17 Recompense to
 no man evil for evil.
 Provide things honest
 in the sight of all
 men.

18 If it be possible,
 as much as lieth in
 you, live peaceably
 with all men.

19 Dearly beloved,
 avenge not your-
 selves, but rather
 give place unto

"for others that you do for yourselves,
 "and would have them desire for you,"
 I think the sense given above preferable,
 as it supposes less of an ellipsis, which I
 would not suppose without apparent ne-
 cessity.

^c Greeks and barbarians.] It is remark-
 able that Dr. Barrow adds, this must in-
 clude living peaceably with heretics and
 schismatics; Barrow's Works, Vol. I. p.
 278: however, the ill treatment which
 must be expected under these hard names

from men of unpeaceable tempers, should
 never lead any to deny or slight what
 they in their consciences judge the truth
 of doctrine or purity of worship.

^d Give place to wrath.] L'Enfant and
 others explain this of giving way to the
 wrath of God, and quote the phrase of
 giving place to the physician, (Ecclus.
 xxxviii. 12,) and giving place to the law,
 (chap. xix. 17,) as authorising that in-
 terpretation. But I think, in both those
 passages, to give place signifies to yield

wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

any of the vindictive passions: as it is written, SECT. (Deut. xxxii. 35.) *Vengeance [is] mine*, that is, XXVIII. it properly belongs to me, and *I will recompense* the deserved punishment, *saith the Lord*. And indeed it requires the wisdom as well as the dignity and majesty of a God to claim and manage it aright. *Therefore*, instead of bearing 20 any thoughts of hurting them that have used you most unkindly and unjustly, *if thine enemy hunger, feed him*, and *if he thirst give him drink*; and on the whole, do him all the good in thy power, as Solomon urgeth, (Prov. xxv. 21.) *for by doing this thou shalt*, as it were, *heap coals of fire on his head*:^e thou wilt touch him so sensibly, that he will no more be able to stand against such a conduct than to bear on his head burning coals; but will rather submit to seek thy friendship, and endeavour by future kindness to overbalance the injury.

Rom. xii. 19.

On all occasions act on this as an-inviolable 21 maxim, and if you do not find the immediate good effect, persist in such a conduct; *be not overcome with evil* where it seems most obstinate, *but overcome evil with good*: for that is the most glorious victory, and a victory which may certainly be obtained, if you will have the courage to adhere to that which being good, is always in its own nature, on the whole, invincible, to whatever present disadvantage it may seem obnoxious.

IMPROVEMENT.

SURELY if any thing consistent with the burdens and sorrows Ver. 12. of mortal life can inspire constant joy, it must be the Christian hope, the hope of our calling. Surely, with a joy thus supported, no tribulation can be too great to be endured with patience, yea with cheerfulness; since whatever it be, the glorious Object of our hope, far from being endangered or diminished by it, shall

without opposing; in which sense it best suits the interpretation given in the paraphrase, which seems most natural. The ingenious and learned Dr. Balguy determines in favour of the other interpretation, (Balguy's Serm. Vol. II. p. 222, 223,) though the force of the reason that follows is not at all impaired by ours.

^e *Thou shalt heap, &c.*] The sense

cannot be, *thou shalt consume him* and bring judgments upon him; for that would be applying to revenge, and building upon it, while it is most expressly forbidden. It must therefore intimate in how tender a manner human nature is affected with favours received from one who has been considered as an enemy.

SECT. rather be secured and increased. Let us therefore continue in-
 XXVIII. stant in prayer, that our minds may be so fortified and en-
 nobled that we may dwell upon these views.

Ver. 13. Well may they keep the heart in so serene and pleasant a state
 as to make us ready to do every act of kindness to our fellow-
 creatures, but especially to those who are heirs with us of this
 hope, whom we ought to esteem it our great honour and privi-
 lege to be able in any measure to assist and accommodate, while
 they are travelling through this too-often inhospitable wilderness
 in the way to that kingdom they are going to receive. It is no
 wonder, that as we are not of this world, but are chosen and
 called out of the world to so glorious a prospect, the world
 should hate and persecute us: but let us neither be dismayed
 nor in any degree exasperated with the ill usage we may meet
 with. Rather, with unfeigned compassion and good-will to the
 most injurious of our enemies, let us not only refrain from re-
 17 paying evil with evil, but render them blessing for curses and
 benefits for wrongs, since we have ourselves found such mercy
 and are called to inherit such a blessing.
 15 Let us cultivate those kind and social affections which this
 great proficient in them all so forcibly inculcates;—that tender
 sympathy which may teach us to share in the joys and sorrows
 16 of all about us—that candid humility which shall, with graceful
 unaffected freedom, stoop to the lowest and the meanest, and
 while it stoops, rise in unsought honours—that distrust of our-
 selves which shall cause us to cease from our own wisdom, that
 we may repose ourselves upon the unerring guidance of our
 18, &c. heavenly Father—that kindly-obstinate attachment to peace—
 that heroic superiority which melts down with kindness the
 heart that but a little before was glowing with rage: And, on
 the whole, that resolute perseverance in goodness which must
 21 be finally victorious, and will assuredly rise with a new acces-
 sion of strength and of glory from every seeming defect.

SECT. XXIX.

*The apostle urges obedience to magistrates, justice in all its branches,
 and love as the fulfilling of the law: concluding the chapter with a
 warm exhortation to that universal sanctity which might become and
 adorn the excellent dispensation of the gospel. Rom. xiii. 1, to the end.*

ROMANS XIII. 1.

AMONG the many exhortations I am now
 giving you, my Christian brethren, to a

ROMANS XIII. 1.

LET every soul be

subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God : the powers that be, are ordained of God.

life worthy of the gospel, that of obedience to magistrates, to which I now proceed, must be acknowledged of distinguished importance. I know the Jews are strongly prejudiced against the thoughts of submitting to heathen governors; but *let me strictly charge and enjoin it upon every soul among you without exception, how holy soever his profession be, and however honourable his station in the church, that he be in all regular and orderly subjection to the superior civil authorities* which Divine Providence hath established in the places where you live. *For there is no such legal authority but may, in one sense or another, be said to be from God.* It is his will that there should be magistrates to guard the peace of societies; and the hand of his providence in directing to the persons of particular governors, ought to be seriously considered and revered. *The authorities that exist under one form or another, are in their different places ranged, disposed, and established by God,*^a the original and universal Governor. *He,*² *therefore, who, by an unjust resistance, endeavours to confound these ranks, and sets himself, as it were, in array*^b *against the authority of which magistrates are possessed,*^c *withstands the disposition of God for the public peace and or-*

SECT.
XXIX.
Rom.
xiii. 1.

² Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:

^a *Disposed and established.*] So I render the word *τάλαιμεναι*, thinking the English word *ordained* rather too strong. Compare Acts xiii. 48, and the note there. Divine Providence *ranges* and in fact *establishes* the various governments of the world; they are, therefore, under the character of governments, in the general to be revered: but this cannot make what is wrong and pernicious in any particular forms, sacred, divine, and immutable, any more than the hand of God in a famine or pestilence is an argument against seeking proper means to remove it.

^b *Sets himself, &c.*] This seems the most direct import of *ἀνίστασθαι*, which may allude to the word *τάλαιμεναι*, *ranged or marshalled* by God, used above with respect to the magistrate, ver. 1.

^c *Authority of which magistrates are possessed.*] Bishop Hopkins lays great stress on the word *ἐξουσία* here used, as signifying a *lawful authority*, and incapable of being applied to an usurper;

and, in pursuance of this, has taken some pains to show that the power of the Roman Emperors in the apostle's time was not usurped, the people having given up their original rights to the senate, and the senate to the Emperors. But as this is a very abstruse question, and the pretended evidence for it very slender and exceptionable, and, so far as I can judge, quite unsatisfactory; so it is certain that *ἐξουσία* is sometimes applied to an *usurped* authority, being applied to the *power of Satan*, Acts xxvi. 18; Eph. ii. 2. Compare Eph. vi. 12; Col. i. 13; chap. ii. 15; Rev. xiii. 2, 4, 5; to which several other instances might be added. But the natural and candid interpretation proposed above needs not the support of such a criticism, and frees us from the endless embarrassment of the question of a king *de jure* and *de facto*. I should think it unlawful to resist the most unjust power that can be imagined, if there was a probability only of doing mischief by it.

SECT. der: *and they who withstand so wise and bene-* and they that resist
XXIX. ficial an appointment *shall receive to themselves* shall receive to them-
condemnation, not only from the civil powers selves damnation.

Rom.
xiii. 2.

they injure, but from the Supreme Sovereign, whose laws they break, and whose order they endeavour to reverse.

3 And indeed the good purposes to which magistracy is subservient, make it very apparent that God must be displeased when that is despised: *for rulers, in their several offices, are not, on the whole, a terror to good works, but to such as are evil,*^d being intended to encourage the former by punishing the latter. *Wouldst thou not therefore be afraid of the high authority with which they are invested? Do that which is good, and thou shalt, according to the general course of administration, have not only protection but*

4 *praise and respect from it.*^e This, I say, may reasonably be expected, and will be the case where the magistrate understands himself and his office: *for he is, according to the original appointment, to be considered as elevated above his fellow-men, not for his own indulgence, dominion, and advantage, but that he might be to thee, and to all the rest of his subjects, as the servant and instrument of God for thine and the public good. But if thou dost that which is evil, and so makest thyself the enemy of that*

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which

^d *Are not a terror to good works, &c.]* If circumstances arise in which this argument is not applicable, it is reasonably to be taken for granted that the apostle did not intend here to pronounce concerning such cases. Nothing can be said for interpreting these passages in favour of unlimited passive obedience, which will not prove any resistance of a private injury unlawful, by the authority of our Lord's decision, Mat. v. 39, 40. And this would subvert the great foundation of magistracy itself, which is appointed by force to ward off and prevent it, or avenge such injuries. But it was very prudent in the apostle not to enter into any question relating to the right of resistance in some extraordinary cases, as those cases are comparatively few, and as the just decisions which he could have given on that subject might possibly have been misrepresented to his own detriment and that of the gospel. The general laws of benevolence to the whole,

so strongly asserted in this context, are in particular cases to determine; and all particular precepts, in whatever universal terms they are delivered, are always to give way to them.

^e *In the general course of administration, &c.]* As it is certain the case often is otherwise, and was particularly so with respect to Nero, under whom this epistle was written, it is necessary to interpret the words with this latitude. And there is great reason to conclude that magistrates in general are in fact much more beneficial than hurtful to society, which is a good argument for a general submission; and this was, as we observed above, all the apostle could intend to enforce. Compare Prov. xviii. 22, where, if I mistake not, the sense is similar, and is to be understood thus: "Generally speaking, a wife is a felicity rather than a detriment to her husband, though to be sure there are many excepted instances."

is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

society of which he is the guardian, thou hast indeed reason to *be afraid: for he holdeth not the sword of justice*, which God hath put into his hand, *in vain.*^f It was given him for this very purpose, that he might smite malefactors, and thereby preserve peace and order in his dominions. And in doing it *he is* to be regarded, not as acting a severe and oppressive part, but as *the servant and substitute of God; an avenger appointed in his name, to [execute,] not his own personal resentment, but the wrath of a righteous Providence, against him that doeth evil*, in instances wherein it would be highly improper to leave that avenging power in the hands of private injured persons. *Therefore*, when this

SECT.
XXIX.
Rom.
xiii. 4.

5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience-sake.

is considered, piety, as well as prudence and human virtue, will teach thee that *it is necessary to be in a regular subjection, not only out of regard to the dread thou mayest reasonably have of that wrath and punishment which man can execute, but also for the sake of conscience*, which will be violated and armed with reproaches against you, if you disturb the public peace, and resist the kind purposes of God, by opposing governors, while they act under his commission. This is in effect what all subjects profess to own, as *on this account you also pay tribute; which magistrates everywhere receive, and is levied for this apparent reason, that they are to be considered as the ministers of the good providence of God, who give to the public the whole of their time, care, and labour, and continually applying themselves to this one affair, the execution of their high office, have a right to be honourably maintained out of the public revenues, on the most obvious principles of equity and justice.*

6 For, for this cause pay you tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

On this principle, *therefore*, be careful that you *render to all* what is justly *their due*, even though you may have opportunities of defrauding them of it, to your own immediate and temporal advantage. *To whom tribute [is due] for your persons or estates, [render] such tri-*

7 Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute

^f *Holdeth not the sword in vain.*] This strongly intimates the lawfulness of inflicting capital punishment, which to deny, is subverting the chief use of magistracy.

SECT. *bute* or taxes;^g and to *whom custom* is due for *is due*, custom to
 XXIX. any commodity exported or imported, render to whom custom, fear
 that *custom*; and seek not clandestinely to con- to whom fear, ho-
 Rom.vey such commodities away without paying it. nour to whom ho-
 xiii. 7.

To *whom reverence* is due^h on account of their worth and character, render *reverence*; and to *whom* any external form of civil *honour* and respect is due by virtue of their office and rank of life, though it should so happen that they have no peculiar merit to recommend them to your regard, scruple not to pay all proper marks of *honour*; and guard against that stiffness which, under pretence of Christian simplicity, by disputing such common forms, may rather indulge pride and occasion reproach.

8 On the whole, *owe nothing to any*, but endeavour to manage your affairs with that economy and prudent attention, that you may as soon as possible balance accounts with all who have demands upon you, except it be with respect to that debt which while you pay you will be renewing; I mean the obligation you will ever be under to *love one another*. That I would recommend to your constant care; *for he that loveth another, hath in a compendious manner fulfilled every thing that the law requireth with respect to him*. For that [precept,] *Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour, Thou shalt not covet any thing that is thy neighbour's, and any other command respecting our fellow-creatures, if such [there be,] is summed up in this one excellent and comprehensive precept*, which I wish may be engraven on all our hearts, so as to regulate every affection and action, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*. Thou shalt learn to put thyself, as it were, in his place, and to act as, in a supposed change of circumstances,

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

^g *Tribute to whom tribute.*] It is well known that the Jews had a favourite notion among them, that they, as the peculiar people of God, were exempted from obligations to pay tribute to Gentiles; (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 1; Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. i. § 2, et cap. 8, [al. 7.] § 1,) against which this passage is direct-

ly levelled, though without pointing them out in any invidious manner.

^h *Reverence.*] This must certainly be the import of *φοβου* here, as also of *φοβητα*, Eph. v. ult. and it expresses the inward disposition, as *τιμω*, honour, expresses the conduct and external behaviour proceeding from it.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

thou couldst reasonably desire to be treated. Now it is very obvious that *love worketh no evil to one's neighbour*; nay, wherever that noble principle governs, it will put men upon doing all they can to ward off injury from one another, and to make the life of each as comfortable and happy as possible: *therefore* it may well be said, as it is asserted above, that *love [is] the accomplishment of the whole law.*

SECT.

XXIX.

Rom.

xiii. 10.

11 And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

And let me urge you to attend to this and to the other precepts I have given, with so much the greater diligence, knowing the circumstances of the present season, which if you consider, you will see that [it is] high time now to awake out of sleep, and vigorously to improve every opportunity of doing good and prosecuting the great business of life, which is to secure the Divine favour and your final happiness: for our great expected salvation [is] now considerably nearer than when we at first believed. We have complete salvation in view, it is continually advancing upon us, flying forward, as it were, on the swiftest wings of time; and that which remains interposed between the present moment and our entering on the promised reward, is comparatively but a very small span.

Act 12

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

therefore at all times in a holy subordination to such a circumstance. And since the night is far advanced, since the dark state of the present life, in which we often confound good and bad, is almost over, and the day is drawing near, even that day which will show every thing in its proper colours and forms; let us therefore put off the works which suit only a state of darkness, and let us put on the complete armour of light. Let us be clothed with all the Christian graces, which, like burnished and beautiful armour, will be at once an ornament and defence, and which will reflect the bright beams that are so gloriously rising upon us. *And as [being] now in the clear and open day, let us take care to walk decently, honourably, and gracefully,ⁱ since the lustre already shining about us requires great reformation and exemplary holiness; not in*

13 Let us walk honestly as in the

ⁱ Let us walk honourably and gracefully.] So εὐσχημονως exactly signifies. Dr. Milner renders it, *let us walk with a grace.*—Fading Flowers of Life, p. 38.

SECT. rioting and drunken debauches, not in chamber-
 XXIX. ing,^k effeminacy, and lasciviousness,^l the vices in
 which so many are wasting and polluting the
 hours which nature has destined to necessary
 repose: not in the contention and emulation
 which the indulgence of such irregular desires

Rom.
 xii. 13.

14 often occasion. But laying aside all these abominations and enormities, let us put on the Lord Jesus Christ,^m our great Sovereign and Saviour. Endeavour, my brethren, to obtain the greatest conformity to his temper, and to appear as like him as possible in every particular in which he can be the object of our imitation; for that short precept will contain all that is necessary to adorn our profession to its greatest height. And while so many are spending their time and thoughts and substance in those low pursuits which regard only the meaner part of their nature, make not a solicitous provision for the flesh, to [fulfil] its irregular desires, nor be intent in pleasing any of the senses, even where their demands may not appear directly criminal; but labour to preserve the superiority of the immortal spirit, and to keep it continually under the discipline of so holy and so noble a religion.

day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 1—5. WHILE subjects learn reverence and obedience to their magistrates, not only for wrath but for conscience-sake, may magistrates

^k Chambering: Κοίτης] This Leigh explains of lying long in bed. I will not defend that sense of the word; but I will here record the observation, which I have found of great use to myself, and to which I may say that the production of this work, and most of my other writings, is owing; viz. that the difference between rising at 5 and at 7 of the clock in the morning, for the space of forty years, supposing a man to go to bed at the same hour at night, is nearly equivalent to the addition of ten years to a man's life, of which (supposing the 2 hours in question to be spent,) 8 hours every day should be employed in study and devotion.

^l Effeminacy and lasciviousness.] I think ασελγεια properly signifies a soft, luxurious, and effeminate manner of life, attended with an affected delicacy, very detri-

mental to that resolution which is so necessary an ingredient in the character of one who would approve himself a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

^m Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.] A strong expression for endeavouring to be clothed with all the virtues and graces which composed his character: Which reminds me of what Plutarch tells us concerning the kings of Persia, that on their coronation-day they put on a robe which the first Cyrus wore before he was king, to remind them of imitating his exemplary temper and behaviour. Plutarch Artaxerx. apud Opera, tom. vi. p. 1851. Edit. Streph. 1572. It is observable, the apostle does not say, "Put on purity and sobriety, peacefulness and benevolence;" but he in effect says all at once, in saying, Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

learn a correspondent care to answer that end of their office which the apostle makes the foundation of such precepts as these, and to be indeed the ministers of God for good, a terror not to good but to evil works.

SECT.
XXIX.

Ver.
3, 4.

GREAT BRITAIN, while I write this,* is happy in a government to which this character may justly be applied. Its subjects are under the greatest obligations to the divine goodness, in having so remarkably overthrown the attempts of those who would have left us little use of the scripture, but would themselves have abused it, to have rivetted on the heaviest fetters by perverting this passage of St. Paul, as if he had intended to subvert every free constitution under heaven, and to put a sword into the hands of merciless tyrants, to kill and take possession of the heritage of the Lord, counting his people but as sheep for the slaughter.

While we are thus happy, we shall be doubly inexcusable if we fail in rendering both honour and tribute, where they are so justly due.

May we extend our care to the universal law of love; and may it be so deeply engraven on our hearts, that the practice of every social virtue may become easy and delightful.

And on the whole, being animated by the approach of salvation, may we awake to the vigorous discharge of our duty; and while the light of the gospel scatters about us so bright a ray, may we walk in every respect worthy of it, that we may have no reason to wish for the veil of darkness to cover our shame. May we not only abstain from the vices which are here branded with the infamy they deserve, but distinguish ourselves in cultivating the contrary virtues. And that we may do it effectually, may we put on the Lord Jesus Christ, remembering continually the obligations we are under to consider his life as the model of our own. So shall we make the gospel-day yet brighter in the eyes of all around us, and anticipate, while we are here in this world of comparative darkness, the lustre with which we hope, through his influence and grace, to shine forth in the celestial kingdom of our Father.

* Anno Domini 1749.

SECT. XXX.

The apostle recommends mutual candour, especially between those Christians who did and those who did not think themselves obliged in conscience to observe the ceremonies enjoined by Moses; and strenuously attempts to turn their zeal for or against those observances into a concern to prepare for their final appearance before the great tribunal. Rom. xiv. 1—12.

ROMANS XIV. 1.

SECT.
XXX.Rom.
xiv. 1.

I KNOW there are different opinions among you Christians at Rome with regard to the obligations of the Mosaic ritual. Now here I would be solicitous to suggest the most peaceful counsels, and to persuade you to mutual forbearance and mutual love. As for *him that is so weak in the Christian faith* as still to retain the prejudices of a Jewish education on this head, let me prevail on you Gentile believers, in this respect better instructed in the nature and extent of Christian liberty, to *receive* and converse with him in a friendly and respectful manner: and do not indulge yourselves in the inclination which you may sometimes find, *to run into debates and distinctions about matters in doubt* between you.^a For one, that is, the converted Gentile, *believeth* very truly and rightly *that he may eat all things* indifferently that are good for food; but *another, who is in this respect weak, eateth* nothing but *herbs* and other vegetables,^b to express his humility and self-denial,

ROMANS XIV. 1.

HIM that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but not to doubtful disputations.*

² For one believeth that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

^a *Debates and distinctions about matters in doubt.*] Dr. Whitby explains *διακρισις* of discriminating persons according to their inward thoughts and reasonings on these heads. The force of the apostle's admirable reasoning in favour of candour and mutual condescension cannot be enervated by saying, as some have unhappily done, that here was no separation between Jewish and Gentile Christians. Had the thing judged indifferent by the latter, and apprehended sinful by the former, been imposed, a separation of communion must have ensued, and the schism; on the apostle's principles, would have been chargeable on the imposers. When it shall please God to awaken in the governors of established Protestant churches such a spirit of moderation and goodness, joined with a true zeal for religion, as to leave such things in that natural state of indifference in which almost all sensible men confess it is best they should be left, many separations will cease of

course, and the healers of such breaches will do a noble service to their country, be honoured by all that love Christianity, and amply rewarded by the great Head of the Church.

^b *Eateth herbs.*] Dr. Whitby demonstrates by many learned quotations here, that some of the Jews used to eat no flesh at all, and others looked upon it as a very high pitch of virtue to abstain from it in Gentile countries, and to subsist entirely on vegetables; because they did not know but any flesh sold in the shambles might have been offered to idols, or at least contracted some other ceremonial pollutions. Mr. Baxter thinks here is a reference to such Christians as might have been Pythagoreans before their conversion, and might retain their old prejudices against animal food. Baxter's Works, Vol. VI. p. 614. But as that aversion to animal food depended on their doctrine of the transmigration of souls, which no Christian could retain,

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

and to guard against the pollution that might attend even the use of clean animals for food, if they are not killed and prepared after the Jewish manner. Now in this diversity of opinion and practice, exercise candour and forbearance to each other, and all will be well. *Let not him that eateth* all kinds of flesh freely *despise* and set at nought *him that eateth not* these prohibited or suspicious things, as if he were a weak and superstitious bigot: *and let not him that eateth* them *not*, but conscientiously abstains from them, *judge* and condemn *him that eateth* them, as a profane, unclean, and intemperate person: *For God hath received him* into the number of his children and people, without laying him under such restraints; and surely where God receives we should not presume to reject.

SECT.
XXX.

Rom.
xiv. 3.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth: Yea, he shall beholden up: for God is able to make him stand.

Let me ask thee seriously on this occasion,⁴ whoever thou mayest be, and how wise and holy soever thou mayest think thyself, *Who art thou that judgest the servant of another?* Wouldst thou think it an indecent thing to meddle with the domestic servant of thy neighbour or of thy friend, and wilt thou pretend to govern Christ's family, and judge of his administration towards the members of it? Know that not to thee, but *to his own master, he standeth or falleth*: it is by Christ he is to be finally acquitted or condemned. *Yea*, if he offends in no greater points than those in debate amongst you, *he shall be upheld* in his Christian profession, and established to eternal salvation; *for God is able to establish him,*^c and his promises assure us that he will do it.

5 One man esteemeth one day above

What I have said with relation to the distinction of meats may also be applied to that of days. *One man*, that is, the Jewish convert, *esteemeth one day above another*:^d He thinks

I think that interpretation is much preferable which refers it to Jewish converts, who were also much more numerous in the church, and possibly might some of them come from the Essenes, a Jewish sect peculiarly strict on this head, so that they abstained not only from flesh but from fruit.

^c *God is able to establish him.*] Dr. Whitby explains this of God's convincing the Jewish converts in general of the inferiority of the Mosaic ritual, by putting a speedy period to the very possi-

bility of observing it in the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem; which would have a peculiar efficacy to wean men's minds from an attachment to it, when considered in connection with Christ's predictions of that event. But I choose the more extensive interpretation, as more obvious and less liable to objection.

^d *Esteemeth one day above another.*] Rapphelius here produces some apposite passages to show that *xpienly* in such a construction signifies *to prefer*.

SECT. their sabbaths and new-moons, and yearly fasts another; another
 XXX. or feasts, have something inviolably sacred, and esteemeth every day
 Rom. that the observation of them is matter of per- alike. Let every man
 xiv. 5. petual and universal obligation. *Another edu- be fully persuaded
 cated among the Gentiles, or more thoroughly in his own mind.*
 instructed in the design and genius of Christi-
 anity, esteemeth every day [*alike,*] without any
 regard at all to the Jewish institution. *Let every
 man freely enjoy his own sentiment,*^e and go on
 in his own way, without impediment or censure.

6 For we may reasonably hope that Christians 6 He that regard-
 are actuated, in the main, by the same princi- eth the day regard-
 ples, when their practices differ according to eth *it* unto the Lord;
 the difference of their judgments; so that *he that* and he that regard-
regardeth a day in this peculiar manner, *regard-* eth not the day, to
eth [it] to the Lord, and takes this distinguishing the Lord he doth not
 notice of it, because he thinks it is the will of regard *it*. He that
 Christ that an honour should still be done to eateth, eateth to the
 these Mosaic institutions: *and on the other hand,* Lord, for he giveth
he that regards not a day, it is *to the Lord* we God thanks; and he
 hope that *he doth not regard [it;]* it is because that eateth not, to the
 he thinks Christ will be honoured by asserting Lord he eateth not,
 the liberty of his followers in this respect. *He* and giveth God
that eateth freely of whatever comes before thanks.
 him, *eateth to the Lord*, endeavours to glorify
 him for it, as becomes a good Christian, *and*
giveth God thanks for the various provision of
 his liberal providence; *and he that eateth not* the
 food which the law forbids, may act on the same
 pious principles, and we ought charitably to
 conclude that it is out of a regard to what he ap-
 prehends the will of *the Lord* that *he eateth it*
not; he cheerfully denies himself what he supposes
 Christ would have him forbear; *and he likewise*
giveth God thanks that other food is provided
 on which he may conveniently subsist, and that
 he is not forced to eat what he thinks unclean
 out of absolute necessity. Now where is the
 damage of all this? and while such a religious
 temper towards God prevails, how little does it
 comparatively signify whether it acts by the use

^e *Let every man freely enjoy his own sen-
 timent.*] Critics have observed that the
 word *πληροπορεῖσθαι* is most properly ap-
 plied to a ship which is carried on by the
 wind and tide, with all its sails spread
 to forward it, and nothing to obstruct it;
 and so the meaning is, *Let him go on in his*

own way without impediment. How strong
 a text this is for the right of private judg-
 ment, I need take no pains to show; but
 the reader may see it vindicated from
 the evasions of a very celebrated writer,
 in Mr. Bennet's Appendix to his *Ireni-*
cum, p. 120—124.

of these things, or by a conscientious abstinence from them! SECT. XXX.

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

It may well be supposed that this is a just representation of the case; for it is certainly what every Christian is obliged to by virtue of our common profession; as *none of us* who understands and answers that engagement, *liveth to himself*; and *none of us*, so far as the circumstances of his death are under the direction of his own choice, *dieth to himself*, nor determines the most important affairs by his own humour or present interest. But from the time of our

Rom. xiv. 7.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's.

giving up our names to Christ, as our Divine Master, to the last day and hour of our continuance in life, *if we live*, it is our concern that *we may live to the Lord*, and strenuously pursue the great purposes of his glory; or that *if we die*, we may *die unto the Lord*, either by sacrificing our lives to his gospel, if he demands it of us, or if we expire in a natural way, by behaving to the last as those who have his love ruling in our hearts, and his sacred cause still in our eye: so that *whether we live or die we are the Lord's*; in consequence of being thus faithfully devoted to Christ, both in life and death, we have the pleasure to think, that living or dying, we are the objects of his care and favour.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

For to this purpose Christ both died and rose again from the dead, and still continues alive, *that he might be the sovereign Lord both of the dead and of the living*. This is the reward bestowed upon him for all his services as Mediator, that he should be exalted to such a kingdom, and that all Christians should thus own themselves his servants; not only in this present world, but in that unchangeable state into which they pass by death; yea, that all the inhabitants of both worlds should be ever subject to his disposal and command.

10 But why dost

But the thought of Christ's exaltation furnishes another argument for the candid temper I am now recommending, as it implies his future appearance to the universal judgment, where our temper, in this respect, will be strictly reviewed. In this light, then, let me seriously ask, *Why dost thou*, O Jewish convert,

- SECT. judge thy Gentile brother for the non-observa-
 XXX. tion of those precepts by which thou thinkest
 Rom. thyself bound? Or why dost thou, O Gentile be-
 xiv, 10. liever, set at nought and deride, as weak or su-
 perstitious, thy Jewish brother, who conscientiously observes that burdensome ritual from which thou art so happy as to apprehend thyself free? This censoriousness or contempt is greatly to be blamed, and either must very ill become the state in which we are and must quickly be: for no principle of our common faith is more certain than this, that *we must all at length appear and be solemnly presented before the tribunal of Christ*: and as it is there that we are all to take our final trial, it must be dangerous
- 11 presumption to anticipate that judgment. Remember it, my brethren, and ponder seriously upon that awful day; for it will assuredly come as it is written, (Isa. xlv. 23,) “ [As] I live, saith the Lord, surely every knee shall bow unto me, and every tongue shall confess to God;” and it is then only that such a great and extensive prophecy shall be completely ac-
- 12 complished: So that every one of us shall render an account of himself to God. Let each of us therefore apply it to his own case, and say to his heart, “ This account must be mine.” And we shall then be too intent on regulating our own conduct, to have either leisure or inclination to be severe or pragmatical in censuring that of our brethren.
- 11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.
- 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 1, &c. LET all the different sects and parties of Christians study to imbibe more of the equitable and lovely temper which the apostle here expresses in so genuine a manner. The divisions of the church are not to be healed by imposing our own sentiments, phrases and forms, and censuring and harassing those that will not acquiesce in them. Such a temper will only engender strife, and mutual provocations will produce mutual increasing resentment.

Let us receive our weaker brethren with tenderness and respect; not despising those who scruple what we practise, not judging those who practise what we scruple. God may receive the one and the other: yea, the different practices of both may proceed from the same general principles, a desire to please him, and to approve ourselves in his sight.

In all this we may unite in a concern that we may not live or die to ourselves, but to Christ. His dying love, his living care, may surely challenge this. Worthy is he who died, and rose again and revived, to be adored and obeyed as *the Lord both of the dead and of the living!* And such, in one view or another, he will finally appear. We shall know it in that day when we shall be called before his judgment-seat. Conscious of so many crimes, and, even in our best days, of so many imperfections, how shall we dare to appear before him; especially if we should then receive judgment without mercy? Let us not tempt it, to our own everlasting confusion, by showing no mercy. SECT. XXX. Ver. 7, 8, 9.

Let us not add to all the offences which may justly cause us to tremble before his tribunal, the criminal arrogance of usurping the place and prerogative of our Judge. Let us remember our relation to him and to each other, and act in a manner becoming it. Let us diligently judge ourselves as those who must be judged of the Lord; so thinking of that grand account, as with an increasing solicitude to prepare for it. *The Lord grant that we may find mercy of the Lord in that day!* The Lord grant that it may also be imparted to many of our brethren who have differed most from us; yea, and through the indulgence of our compassionate Saviour, to many who have been prone to censure and condemn us for those things which he knows we have done from a desire to please him, or refused to do from a fear of offending him!

SECT. XXXI.

The apostle farther urges the mutual tenderness and candour he had recommended above, by representing the love of Christ to all Christians, the nature and design of his religion, and the danger of a contrary temper. Rom. xiv. 13, to the end.

ROMANS XIV. 13.

ROMANS XIV. 13.

LET us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather,

I HAVE just been reminding you of your appearance before the tribunal of Christ, and the account which every man must render of himself there: and now give me leave a little farther to pursue the consequence which so naturally follows. *Let us not therefore any longer judge one another,^a but rather judge ye and de-* SECT. XXXI. Rom. xiv. 13.

^a Let us not therefore any longer judge one another.] It is very plain that the word *κρίναι* is here used in two very dif-

ferent senses; as Raphelius on this text shows *κατακρίναι* is used in the same sentence by Herodotus.

SECT. termine *this* as matter of undoubted and im- that no man put a
 XXXI. portant duty, *not to lay any stumbling-block or* stumbling-block, or
 ——— scandal *before a brother*:^b to do nothing, how an occasion to fall,
 Rom. indifferent soever it may be in itself, which may in *his brother's way*.
 xiv. 13. tend to prejudice, discourage, or mislead any
 other Christian.

- 14 *I know, for instance, and am at length per-* 14 I know, and
suaded, by the powerful teaching of the Lord am persuaded by the
Jesus Christ, though it be so contrary to the Lord Jesus, that *there*
principles I imbibed in my education, and so is nothing unclean of
strenuously maintained in my Pharisaical state, itself; but to him
that nothing [is] unclean of itself; that there is that esteemeth any
no moral turpitude in any kind of food by thing to be unclean,
which the human body may be nourished; but *it is unclean.*
that, separate from particular circumstances
which may arise, it may lawfully be eaten; there
is nothing, I say, unclean, unless [it be] to him
that in his conscience accounteth any thing to be
unclean: [and to him,] while he retaineth that
opinion, [it is] indeed unclean, how indifferent
soever it is in itself; and he will contract guilt
before God, by allowing himself in it, whether
it be to indulge his own taste or to engage the
favour of others, whilst he hath this inward ap-
 15 prehension of its being unlawful. *But if there* 15 But if thy bro-
 should not be such an apprehension concerning *ther be grieved with*
 the thing in itself considered, yet it may be in *thy meat, now walk-*
 effect prohibited to thee, as injurious to others; *est thou not chari-*
 for *if thy brother be grieved,*^c wounded, and led *tably. Destroy not*
 into sin, *by [thy] use of meat, how dost thou any* him with thy meat,
 longer *walk according to that noble principle of* for whom Christ died.
 love which I have just now been so earnestly
 recommending? How innocent soever it may in
 itself seem, *O do not, if thou hast any bowels*
for him, or any regard for thy great Master,
destroy him by thy rash and unkind use of such
particular meat, for whom Christ not only
submitted to smaller instances of self-denial,
but died in the agonies of the cross. Is a

^b *A stumbling-block.*] Some say that
 σκανδαλον properly signifies “ a piece of
 “ wood that supports a trap, which falls
 “ on its being moved,” and so may with
 peculiar propriety signify *whatever may*
be the occasion of ensnaring another, and
drawing him into sin and mischief.

^c *If thy brother be grieved.*] Hence it

appears that grieving a person does not
 signify merely putting him out of hu-
 mour, but leading him into sin. The
 grief therefore is that which arises from
 a consciousness of having acted amiss,
 in conformity to the example of a per-
 son considered as superior, whether in
 rank or genius, knowledge or piety.

SECT.

XXXI.

Rom.
xiv. 16.

16 Let not then
your good be evil
spoken of.

17 For the king-
dom of God is not
meat and drink, but
righteousness and
peace, and joy in the
Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in
these things serveth
Christ, is acceptable
to God, and approved
of men.

19 Let us therefore
follow after these
things which make
for peace, and things
wherewith one may
edify another.

20 For meat de-
stroy not the work of
God. All things in-
deed are pure, but it

morsel of meat indeed so great a thing to a Christian, that for the sake of it an immortal soul should be endangered and the blood of a Redeemer injured? *Let not then your liberty, which is in itself good, be slandered and blamed for being the occasion of so much mischief as such an ill use of it may probably produce. And surely none of you can pretend to object any thing from conscience, against abstaining from these things. For the kingdom of God, in-17* to which we are entered by believing in Christ and becoming his subjects, *consists not in meat and drink*; it neither prohibits nor enjoins such things as these, nor is taken up with such little matters: *but the great design of it is to regulate the temper of its professors, and in the most effectual manner to cultivate and promote righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; that is, a cheerful temper, supported by a consciousness of strict integrity, established on principles of universal love, and inspired by the blessed Spirit of God.^d And he that in these 18* things faithfully serveth Christ, and acts upon the great maxims of his religion, [is] *acceptable to God*, whether he abstains from the liberties in question or allows himself in them: *and he will also be in the main approved by men too; for bad as the world is, upright and benevolent men who put on no affected rigour and severities in religion, are generally esteemed and beloved in it. Thus let us therefore act, and with 19* all possible diligence *pursue the things which tend to peace, and may promote our mutual edification in our common faith. And whoever 20* thou art that mayest disrelish the exhortation in this connection, *do not* indulge so mean a taste as *for the sake of* this or that particular kind of *meat to destroy* thy brother; who, as a man, would appear *the noblest work of God* in this lower world, if all the peculiar considerations of Christianity were out of the question. It is true *indeed*, as I hinted above, that in themselves *all things [are] pure; yet [that is]*

^d A cheerful temper, &c.] This is the interpretation which Dr. Scott has given in his Christian Life, Vol. I. p.

285; and I think, on the whole, preferable to any other.

SECT. morally evil to a man, that he eateth with of- is evil for that man
XXXI. fence and scandal, contrary to the rule of his who eateth with of-
fence.

Rom.
xiv. 21.

In this view, I may venture to say, *[it is] good neither to eat any kind of flesh, though that would be a much more rigorous self-denial than I am now pleading for; nor even to drink wine, though in the most moderate degree; nor indeed to indulge in [any thing] else by which thy brother is scandalized or weakened, that is, by which he may either be ensnared or discouraged in his religious course.*

21 *It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.*

22 Thou wilt perhaps plead, that *thou hast faith* in a superior exercise, and beholdest Christianity in a more extensive and generous view. It is well; and I could not wish thy views should be more contracted. But if thou hast such a just persuasion of the indifference of those things which others scruple, yet in circumstances like these which I here suppose, *have it to thyself before God: content thyself that he is witness to it, and conceal those apprehensions, just as they may be, in thine own breast, when they cannot be published with advantage or without offence. But permit me to add upon this occasion, happy [is] he who doth not condemn himself in the thing which he alloweth: it is a happy thing for a man to be quite easy in what he does, and free not only from the reproaches but the suspicions of his conscience, and to use even lawful enjoyments only in a lawful and*

22 Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 regular degree. *But he that really in his conscience maketh a difference between one sort of food and another, is condemned by God as a sinner, if he eat out of unbridled appetite, vain complaisance, or weak shame. It must in such a case be criminal, because [he eateth] not with faith, that is, with a full satisfaction in his own mind that God allows and approves the action. For it may be laid down as a general maxim in all these cases, that whatsoever is not of faith is sin; since the divine authority ought to be so sacred with every man, as to engage him not only to avoid what is plainly and directly contrary to it, but what he apprehends or even suspects to be so, though that apprehension or*

23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.

suspicion should chance to be founded on his own-ignorance or mistake. SECT.
XXXI.

IMPROVEMENT.

STILL let that great and final account which each *must render of himself to God* be kept in our mind, that we may learn obedience to him, candour to each other, and a tender care to avoid every thing that might give unnecessary offence to our brethren. And in the views of it, let us learn always to reverence our own consciences, so as never to be engaged to do what we suspect to be unlawful: since no consideration can ever balance the infinite evil of offending God and bringing guilt on our own souls. That is to us unclean which we esteem to be so, and what is not of faith is sin. Ver. 12.
14—23

Let us also be cautious that we do not incur guilt and condemnation, even by things which we allow as in the main lawful; solicitously attending, not only to the general nature but the probable consequences of our actions. And where there is danger of injuring the souls of others, let us often reflect that Christ died for them; and estimate, so far as we can conceive it, the value of souls by the value of that blood by which they were redeemed. 15

Let us also take great heed that we do not give occasion to others, by our imprudent conduct, to speak evil of that which is in itself good. And that we may not do it, let us study those great and generous notions of religion which this excellent passage of scripture gives us. Let it be written upon our hearts, *that the kingdom of God is not meat or drink*; that it doth not consist in a zeal for or against any of the little distinctions by which Christians have been so often divided, and which have been too frequently the occasion of mutual alienation in their affections. Let us study and practise more *righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*. The approbation of God consequent on this may well support us, though men should censure us as lukewarm, yea, perhaps, as hypocritical and interested too, in the candid regards we show to those which differ from each other and from us. God will remember their rashness and forwardness to these uncharitable censures: but let us rather say, "May he cure and forgive them!" 17
18

Yet while we cultivate the amiable temper here set before us, bad as the world is, we may hope that we shall be excepted by many; and indeed, in proportion to this knowledge of our real character, by all whose acceptance and friendship is most to be valued. Let us not therefore be discouraged at any ill usage which, in particular instances, we may meet with; but still follow the things that make for peace and conduce to mutual edi- 19

SECT. XXXI. *fication*: and the God of peace will be with us, and Jesus, the great Lord of the church, which is his house, will smile on our attempts to build it up into one united and beauteous edifice, till he calls us to his temple above, where all is order, and harmony, and love, for ever.

SECT. XXXII.

The apostle farther urges mutual condescension by new motives, particularly the example of Christ and the goodness of God to us all, and the regard which Christ had shown to Jews and Gentiles, in bringing or sending the gospel to them, according to the tenor of prophecies which he adds to the list of those produced above. Rom xv. 1—17.

ROMANS XV. 1.

SECT.
XXXII.

Rom.
xv. 1.

SEEING *therefore*, my brethren, it is so dangerous for any to do that concerning which they are not in their consciences satisfied that it is assuredly lawful, we ought to take great care that we do not, by our uncharitable impositions or irregular examples, lay a temptation in their way to do it. And *we who are strong*, that is, who perfectly understand the liberty which Christianity gives to its professors, *ought*, with all tender sympathy and compassion, *to bear the infirmities of the weak*, not only tolerating them, but in some instances restraining our own inclinations out of a regard to their advantage, *and not*, as too many do, *to please ourselves*, to gratify our own inclinations and humours, whether others be comforted or grieved, edified or ensnared. On the contrary, *let every one of us* rather make it his care, so far as he lawfully and conveniently can, to *please [his] neighbour* where it may be *for [his] real good*, and condescend even to his ignorance and prejudices, where there is reason to hope it may conduce to his *edification* and that of the church, which is nearly interested in the mutual tenderness of its members for each other.

3 And surely we must be disposed to act such a part towards our brethren; *for* we all well know that the Lord Jesus *Christ*, our great and Divine Master, though so infinitely exalted above us, *pleased not himself; but* when he vouchsafed in

ROMANS XV. 1.

WE then that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself;

but as it is written,
The reproaches of
them that reproached
thee fell on me.

mercy to visit this low world of ours, instead of studying his own ease and pleasure, he submitted to an almost continued series of self-denial, mortification, and trouble, for our sakes. He considered the weakness and infirmities of those about him, that he might teach them and train them up for service, as they were able to bear it. (Mark iv. 33.) Yea, he even submitted with the greatest gentleness, to much reproach and contempt; as it is written, (Psal. lxix. 9,) in words which may well be applied to him; "*The* "*reproaches of those who reproached thee are* "*fallen upon me.*^a I have placed myself in a "*world where I have been afflicted with the* "*wickedness of mankind, which I have con-* "*tinually seen and heard about me, and which* "*has been, through the whole course of my* "*life, my continual grief and burden.*"

SECT.
XXXII.
Rom.
xv. 3.

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning: that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Now, by the way, I accommodate this text 4 to the purpose before me, because I think we may make the best we can of every scripture, to produce and cherish good dispositions and pious sentiments in our hearts. *For whatever things were formerly written, were written for our instruction, that we through patience and consolation of the scriptures, that is, by the strenuous exercise of that patience which the consolations administered in scripture so powerfully support, might have an assured and joyful hope in the midst of all our tribulation.*

5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus:

Now may the God of patience and consolation, 5 from whom all these gracious and seasonable provisions proceed, give you more of this blessed temper, that ye may have the same mutual affection, according to the example of Jesus Christ:^b

^a *The reproaches of those, &c.*] Some expositors refer this to Christ's having undertaken by his sufferings to expiate the guilt of sin, every species of which may be considered as a reproach cast on the law and government of God. See Cradoc in loc. I have given what seemed to me the more direct and natural sense, but will not say this other should be excluded, which may well agree both with the words and connection. It must, on the principle on which the apostle goes in many of his quotations, be very pleasant to observe how all the expressions of the highest piety and devotion,

to be found in the writings or discourses of good men of old, are applicable to Christ. But many learned critics maintain that the lxixth Psalm may, in its original sense, be interpreted as a prophecy of the Messiah. How inexpressible a grief and burden the sight of so much wickedness must have been to so pure and holy a mind as that of our Lord, it is impossible for us fully to conceive; but were we more like him, we might, and we certainly should, enter more into it than we generally do.

^b *The same mutual affection, according to the example of Jesus Christ.*] Raphelius

SECT. *That with one mind [and] one mouth, with united*
 XXXII. *hearts and voices, ye may glorify the God and*
 Rom. *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath sent*
 xv. 6. *his beloved Son into the world, to unite our*

6 That ye may with
 one mind and one
 mouth glorify God,
 even the Father of
 our Lord Jesus
 Christ.

to those devout praises which we address to his
 7 blessed self through him. *Therefore, whether*
ye were, before your conversion to Christianity,
Jews or Gentiles, considering it now as an en-
dearing bond, which causes every difference to
be forgot, receive ye one another, and embrace
one another, with mutual love; as Christ hath,
without any distinction, received us all to the
glory of God. And greatly will that sublime
end at which he aimed in all, even the glory
of his heavenly Father, be promoted by such
endeared affection in his people towards each
other.

7 Wherefore, re-
 ceive ye one another,
 as Christ also re-
 ceived us to the
 glory of God.

8 *Now I say this with peculiar regard to those*
differences in judgment which I know are so
ready to prevail among Christians of different
educations, as to the obligations of the Mosaic
law. And I would remind you Gentiles, that
you ought not to suffer your hearts to be alien-
ated from your Jewish brethren for their attach-
ment to it; because Jesus Christ was [made] a
minister of the circumcision; as he was a Jew by
birth, he received circumcision himself, in
token of his obligation to observe the law: and
confined his personal ministry, according to what
he himself declared concerning the limitation of
his embassy, (Mat. xv. 24,) to the lost sheep of
the house of Israel. And this was for the illus-
tration of the truth and fidelity of God, to con-
firm and verify the promises so long since [made]
to Abraham and the other fathers of that na-
 9 *tion. And I would remind Jewish believers,*
that he also came that he might gather together
all the children of God scattered abroad among
the Gentiles, that they might glorify God for [his]
mercy in granting them a participation of the
same privileges; and gave it in charge to his
apostles, that they should raise disciples to him

8 Now I say that
 Jesus Christ was a
 minister of the cir-
 cumcision for the
 truth of God, to con-
 firm the promises
 made unto the fa-
 thers:

9 And that the
 Gentiles might glori-
 fy God for his mer-

has evidently shown that *αὐτὸ φέρειν*
signifies to agree in an harmonious and af-
fectionate manner; and that the preposi-
tion καὶ may be rendered according to

the example of. Compare Gal. iv. 28;
1 Pet. i. 15; Eph. iv. 24. See Raphael.
Annot. ex Herod. in loc.

cy; as it is written,
For this cause I will
confess to thee
among the Gentiles,
and sing unto thy
name.

10 And again he
saith, Rejoice, ye
Gentiles, with his
people.

11 And again, Praise
the Lord, all ye Gen-
tiles; and laud him,
all ye people.

12 And again Esaias
saith, There shall be
a root of Jesse, and
he that shall rise to
reign over the Gen-
tiles, in him shall
the Gentiles trust.

13 Now the God
of hope fill you with
all joy and peace in

among all nations: (Mat. xxviii. 19.) So that it is a failure of love and duty to Christ, not to receive them. And accordingly the Gentiles are often spoken of in the Old Testament, as called to join with the Jews in worshipping the God of Israel: as it is written, (Psal. xviii. 49.)

"For this cause will I confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing praises unto thy name."^c And again, he, that is Moses, saith, (Deut. xxxii. 10 43.) *"Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people;"* which may intimate their being called to participate the blessings once peculiar to Israel.

And again, David saith, (Psalm cxvii. 1.) *"Praise the Lord, all ye distant nations, and repeat his praise, all ye people."* Now surely this glorious privilege of an admission into the church, may justly engage the Gentile nations to praise God in sublimer strains than any other occasion to which we can suppose either Moses or David to refer. And again, Isaiah 12 says, expressly in this view, (Isa. xi. 10.) *"There shall be a root from the stock of Jesse, and one arising to rule over the Gentiles, [and] in him shall the Gentiles hope and trust; not dreading destruction, but cheerfully expecting protection and salvation from thence."* It is evident, therefore, how unreasonable it would be to despise them, and how fit it is affectionately to receive, esteem, and embrace them.

I am willing, therefore, to persuade myself that this mutually candid temper will prevail among you; and in the confidence of it, I commend you all, without any distinction, to the divine grace and blessing. And accordingly, may the God of hope, from whose mercy all the hopes both of Jews and Gentiles are derived, fill you with all sacred joy and peace in believing!

^c *I will confess to thee, &c.*] Diodati and many others suppose this to be only an allusion to the words of David in the place referred to. Mr. Pierce has taken great pains to prove that the whole xviiith Psalm is a direct prophecy of Christ, who is, according to his interpretation, to be considered as speaking throughout the whole of it. In which view he would render the title, "The song which David sang when God de-

livered him from the hand of Sheol, " (instead of Saul,) that is, the grave." But I cannot think his reasoning conclusive; and the 23^d verse of that Psalm seems an invincible objection against this solution. I have taken a middle way, which I hope the attentive reader will see reason to approve. Compare chap. ii. 24, where the same method of quoting seems evidently to be taken.

SECT.
XXXII.
Rom.
xv. 9.

SECT. May he give you a well-grounded complacency believing, that ye
 XXXII. and comfort, in consequence of the growing may abound in hope
 strength of your faith, *that you may abound in a* through the power of
 the Holy Ghost.

Rom.
 xv. 13.

more cheerful and lively *hope* of eternal glory,
through the power of the Holy Spirit confirming
 all those habits of grace which you experience,
 as planted and rooted in your souls by his agency.

14 *And* cheerfully do I expect this, when I reflect
 on what he has already done; for *I am* indeed
myself persuaded concerning you, my brethren,
that ye are already full of goodness and of un-
 feigned benevolence to each other, *being filled,*
 through those illuminating influences which you
 have received, *with all spiritual knowledge, and*
 so well acquainted with the whole nature and
 genius of the Christian religion, as to be both
able and inclined to admonish and encourage one
another as to this meek and peaceable disposi-
 tion which I have been recommending, and
 every other part of an amiable and valuable cha-

14 *And I myself*
 also am persuaded
 of you, my brethren,
 that ye also are
 full of goodness,
 filled with all know-
 ledge, able also to
 admonish one an-
 other.

15 racter. *Nevertheless, brethren, I have written*
the more boldly to you, and enlarged with the
greater freedom, in this part of my epistle, on
the privilege to which God hath called Gentile
believers, in some measure as stirring up your
grateful and pious remembrance of them, because
of that great grace and favour which is given to

15 *Nevertheless,*
 brethren, I have
 written the more
 boldly unto you, in
 some sort as putting
 you in mind, because
 of the grace that is
 given to me of God,

16 *me of God:* Even *that I should be the minis-*
tering servant of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles,
administering to them, in his name and by his
authority, the infinitely valuable gospel of God:
that the offering the Gentiles to him, as a holy
sacrifice, by my hands, may be acceptable to
God, being sanctified and set apart by the Holy
Spirit, so plentifully communicated to them in

16 That I should be
 the minister of Jesus
 Christ to the Gen-
 tiles, ministering the
 gospel of God; that
 the offering up of
 the Gentiles might
 be acceptable, being
 sanctified by the
 Holy Ghost.

17 a rich variety of gifts and of graces.^d *I have*
therefore, in this respect, considerable matter of
boasting in Christ Jesus, with respect to the things
of God,^e and the office which I bear in his

17 I have therefore
 whereof I may glory
 through Jesus Christ,
 in those things which
 pertain to God.

^d Sanctified by the Holy Spirit, &c.] To explain this of the *miraculous descent of the Holy Spirit*, supposed to have happened at Antioch in Pisidia, on converts who might be called the first-fruits of the idolatrous Gentiles, (Acts xiii. 52,) which is the interpretation advanced by the author of Miscel. Sacra. (Vol. I. p. 112.)

and his followers, is not only a needless limitation of the more noble and natural sense here given, but in my judgment, for reasons in part given in my notes on the Acts, and explication which goes upon various principles, precarious, or rather utterly incredible.

^e With respect to the things of God, &c.]

church, which I esteem far more honourable SECT.
than any services of the Jewish state or priest- xxxii.
hood.

IMPROVEMENT.

MAY the abundant communication of the Spirit that is in Jesus Christ form us more to the amiable temper here recommended! That we may prove the distinguished strength of our minds by the superior fortitude with which we bear the infirmities of our weaker brethren, and may seek the noble pleasure of pleasing our neighbours for their good and to their edification. Let the generous self-denial of our great Lord be in this view before our eyes: and let us endeavour to feel the reproaches which are cast upon God much more sensibly than those which immediately fall upon ourselves. Ver. 2.

Happy are we in the scriptures, which, through Divine Providence and grace, have been written for our instruction. May they inspire us with patience and consolation, and establish our souls in humble hope! May our hearts be cemented in the bond of mutual love, *that with one mind and one mouth we may glorify* 5, 6, 7 God; and receive each other with an endearment like that with which, if we are true believers, notwithstanding our smaller differences, we are received by him.

Mercy is communicated by Christ to Jews and Gentiles, who therefore are justly required to unite their praises to the root of Jesse. Let us all trust under the shadow of this pleasant plant, and may we be filled with *all joy and peace in believing*: What can furnish out so calm a peace, so sublime a joy, as the Christian hope? May we all abound in it by the power of the Holy Ghost. And surely if we are filled with such joy and hope, we must be filled with all goodness too, with a truly benevolent temper towards others, which a sense of our own happiness tends most powerfully to promote. We Gentiles have been presented to God as a holy offering; may we be sanctified more and more by the Spirit, and established in a firm confidence in Christ, that he will transact all our concerns with God under the character of the great Mediator: esteeming that the most happy and glorious circumstance in the station which Providence may have assigned to us, which gives us the greatest opportunity of spreading the honour of so dear a name, and of presenting praises and services to God through him. 8—12

τα ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ.] Raphelius very justly observes that this phrase has a peculiar propriety when applied to sacerdotal affairs, and especially victims presented to

God, of which the apostle is here speaking. Other texts are illustrated by this remark, and particularly Heb. ii. 17, See Raphel. Not. ex Xen. in loc.

SECT. XXXIII.

The apostle takes occasion from what he had been saying, to mention the extent of his own labours and his purposes of further journeys, in which he hoped to visit the Romans; in the mean time earnestly recommending himself to their prayers. Rom. xv. 18, to the end.

ROMANS XV. 18.

SECT.
XXXIII.Rom.
xv. 18.

I HAVE hinted above at the cause I have to rejoice and boast in Christ as to what relates to God and the office of my Christian ministry. *For I will not dare to boast falsely, nor even speak any thing of what Christ hath not indeed wrought by me, to bring the Gentiles into obedience. No: God forbid that I should either exceed the bounds of truth in making the report, or arrogate any thing to myself as my own work, when speaking of the conversions that have indeed been made. I humbly confess that it is Christ who hath wrought whatever is done: yet I boldly declare that his grace and mercy hath in this respect distinguished me both in word and deed, by the manner in which he hath enabled me to speak and the things*

19 *which he hath strengthened me to perform. He hath wrought by the miraculous energy of signs and wonders, accomplished in and by the amazing power of the Spirit of God, which hath not only been plentifully imparted to me, but bestowed on others by the laying on of my hands; so that thus supported, I have with the happiest effect fully preached and explained the gospel of Christ from Jerusalem, Antioch, and Arabia in the east, round about through all the Lesser Asia and Greece, even as far as the western shores of Illyricum, which so nearly borders on your own celebrated Italy.^a For it has still been the object of my ambition, so far as Providence would permit me to indulge it, to preach*

ROMANS XV. 18.

FOR I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed,

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the

^a As far as the western shores of Illyricum.] Though it is evident from hence that St. Paul, before the date of this epistle, which was in the year 58, had preached the gospel in these regions, it is observable that Luke takes no notice of this in the history of the Acts, where he also omits to mention the journey he

took to Arabia on his first conversion, and several other very remarkable facts, referred to in the xith chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians and elsewhere; and it is very possible that the visit to Crete, when Titus was left behind to ordain elders, Tit. i. 5, might be of this number.

gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

21 But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.

23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;

24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you; for I trust

the gospel, not where Christ was [already] named, lest I should seem desirous to build upon another man's foundation,^b and so decline the difficulties which attend the settlement of new churches. Others indeed have done this and 21

little else; but I have chosen a different manner of acting, as it is written, in words well applicable to the series of my labours, (Isa. lii. 15.) "*They to whom nothing was declared concerning him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand.*" Thus have many received from my mouth the first notices they have ever had of true religion, and of the method of salvation by the Great Redeemer. The consequence therefore was, that I have been long hindered from coming to you; which, out of my singular affection for you, I was very desirous of doing, though it be something contrary to the method of proceeding which I generally choose, as you have the Christian religion already, by the Divine grace, most happily planted among you. But now having no longer place, either at Corinth or elsewhere in these Grecian climates, no more work of this kind remaining to be done here of which Providence seems to open any probable prospect, and having also on various accounts a great desire for many years to come to you, I will attempt to put it into execution. If I go into Spain, I will endeavour, if possible, to come to you; ^c for I hope quickly to have an opportu-

SECT.
XXXIII.
Rom.
xv. 20.

^b Object of my ambition, so far as Providence would permit me to indulge it, to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, &c.] The meaning, to be sure, cannot be that Paul scorned to come after any other Christian minister; which would have argued a height of temper very inconsistent with the humility of this blessed apostle, and does not agree with what we read in the history of the Acts, of his going to preach the gospel at Damascus, Antioch, and Jerusalem; to which it seems probable Troas, if not Corinth or Ephesus, may be added. It may signify, that far from declining dangers and oppositions which might especially be expected in first breaking up, as it were, the fallow-ground of heathen and unevangelized countries, he rather felt a sublime ambition, as φιλοτιμία signifies, (see Elsner, Vol. II. p.

64.) to make the first proclamation of a Redeemer's name in places where it had before been quite unheard of. And probably, in mentioning this, he may glance upon those false apostles who crept into churches which he had planted, and endeavoured to establish their own reputation and influence there, by alienating the hearts of his own converts from him, their spiritual father; while, like some in our own days, who have trod most exactly in their footsteps, they built on his grand and noble foundations an edifice of wood, and hay, and stubble, 1 Cor. iii. 12.

^c If I go to Spain, &c.] It appears probable from hence, considering the principle which St. Paul chose to govern himself by, of not building on another man's foundation, that no apostle had yet planted any church in Spain;

SECT. nity of going thither, and as I pass by, will
 XXXIII. contrive, if I can, to see you, and shall expect to
 — be brought forward by you in my way thither,
 Rom. by the kind attendance of some of my friends
 xv. 24. at Rome, and the refreshment which my spirit
 may receive from others; if I may first not
 only have a short interview in passing, but
 make such an abode with you as to be in some
 degree satisfied with your [company:] I say in
 some degree, for I know that if I were to in-
 dulse my own affection to you, my visit would
 be much longer than the views of duty else-
 where will permit.

- 25 This I speak with relation to my future de-
 signs: but I am now going to Jerusalem, minis-
 tering to the necessities of the saints there by
 such contributions as I have raised for their
 subsistence, or may farther collect as I pro-
 26 secute my journey. For it hath pleased the
 [churches of] Macedonia and Achaia^d to make
 a certain collection for the poor saints, their be-
 lieving brethren, that are in Jerusalem, who
 are exposed to such peculiar persecution and
 27 affliction. I say, it hath pleased them to do this;
 and though I acknowledge their free love
 and generosity in it, yet I may say that in a
 sense they are their debtors: for if the Gen-
 tiles have been brought into so happy a union
 with God's once peculiar people, and are made
 partakers of their spiritual things, the inval-
 uable blessings of the gospel, first brought to
 them from Jerusalem, and by persons of the
 Jewish nation too; they ought certainly to be
 ready with all religious gratitude and respect
 to minister to them in their carnal things, and
 impart the inferior blessings of Providence, in
 28 which they so much more abound. Having
 therefore dispatched this affair, and sealed to
 them, that is, safely delivered as under seal, this
 present, which is the fruit of that love and
 care which their Gentile brethren so justly ex-

to see you in my
 journey, and to be
 brought on my way
 thitherward by you,
 if first I be some-
 what filled with your
 company.

25 But now I go
 unto Jerusalem, to
 minister unto the
 saints.

26 For it hath
 pleased them of Ma-
 cedonia and Achaia
 to make a certain
 contribution for the
 poor saints which are
 at Jerusalem.

27 It hath pleased
 them verily, and
 their debtors they
 are. For if the Gen-
 tiles have been made
 partakers of their
 spiritual things, their
 duty is also to mi-
 nister unto them in
 carnal things.

28 When there-
 fore I have perform-
 ed this, and have
 sealed to them this

which, as Dr. Geddes justly observes, very ill agrees with the legend of St. James; for, according to that, he had now been 15 years in Spain, and had erected several bishoprics there. Geddes. Misc. Vol. II. p. 221.

^d Churches of Macedonia, &c.] As we read of no more than one collection of

the Macedonian churches, which was that directed by Paul when he went from Ephesus to Macedonia, (Acts xx. 1.) in the year of Christ 57, this circumstance seems to fix the date of this epistle pretty early in 58, as was observed in the introduction, and the former note there referred to.

fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

29 And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me;

31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints:

32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

press towards them, *I will*, if it please God to give me a favourable opportunity, *come by you into Spain.* And as I doubt not but you will pray for me, that my coming may be comfortable and useful for your confirmation in religion; so I have a cheerful confidence that God will hear your prayers, and may say, that *I know that when I come among you I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*, that is, with a full and abundant blessing attending my ministerial and evangelical labours. Yet 30 when I write thus, it is not from any particular revelation to assure me that I shall be enabled to fulfil this purpose. I know that in this journey to Jerusalem I have, humanly speaking, a very dangerous scene before me, having some of my most mortal and implacable enemies to contend with. And therefore, as I cannot *but* apprehend the interest of the gospel to be concerned in my life and liberty, *I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love which is the genuine fruit of the Spirit,^e that you join your utmost strength and fervency with mine,^f in [your] daily prayers to God for me, That I may be rescued from the unbelievers* 31 *in Judea;*^g who are so full of rancour against me as a deserter from their cause, and will, I am sure, spare no force or fraud to destroy me; *and also that my ministration at Jerusalem, in the charitable affair which I mentioned above, may be acceptable to the saints*, for whose use it is intended; so that no prejudices in our Christian brethren there, against the believing Gentiles, may prevail so far as to prevent their receiving it with a becoming candour and gratitude: *That so, in consequence of all, I may come to you* 32 *with joy by the will of God, and that I may be refreshed [together] with you in our intended*

SECT.
XXXIII.
Rom.
xv. 29.

^e *By the love of the Spirit.*] Some would explain this of the love which the Spirit of God bears to us, or the affection which we owe to that gracious agent; and were we certain that either of these were the genuine sense, important consequences would follow.

^f *Join your utmost strength with mine.*] Elsner (Observ. Vol. II. p. 65.) has a beautiful note on this word συναντισσασθαι, to show how exactly that is the import of it.

^g *That I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea.*] How extreme their bigotry and rage was, appears from their behaviour to him at the very time here referred to, Acts xxi.—xxiv. It was from a sense of the great importance of his life to the cause of Christianity, that he is thus urgent; else we may be assured he would gladly have given it up. Phil. i. 21, &c.

SECT. interview. *And, in the mean time, may the* 33 Now the God
 XXXIII. *God of peace, who has graciously given us that* of peace be with you
 ————— peace with himself which we esteem the first all. Amen.
 Rom. and greatest of blessings, and hath cemented
 xv. 33. our hearts in those Christian bonds of peace and
 love to each other, [*be*] *with you all, whether*
I am present or absent. Amen!

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. LET us behold with pleasure the modesty and humility which
 18, 19. is joined with all the zeal of this holy apostle, while he thus
 obliquely owns, in a manner which shows how familiar the
 thought was to his mind, that all he had done in the Christian
 ministry, and for the propagation and advancement of the gos-
 pel, was only what Christ had done by him to procure such
 obedience of the Gentiles, both in word and in deed.

Adored be the grace that made his labours so successful, and
 sowed the blessed seed so wide by his diligent hand, from Jeru-
 salem unto Illyricum. Most divine instructions did he give
 them in matters of faith, and he taught them to express that
 faith by their works. While he was dead to all thoughts of
 enriching himself, and in some instances chose rather to main-
 25, &c. tain himself by his own labours than to subsist on the bounty
 of others, his liberal soul devised liberal things for his necessi-
 tious brethren. He raised a noble collection, and was much
 concerned, not only that it might be safely but acceptably
 31 delivered.

Well may our souls be edified by observing the things which
 lay nearest the heart of this generous apostle, that coming to
 his Christian friends at Rome *he might come in the fulness of*
the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and that if he was spared
 through their prayers, it might be for public usefulness. St.
 Paul, dead as he was to human applause, was, from much
 nobler motives, solicitous about his acceptance; and he shows
 by his manner of speaking, what a sense he had of the degree
 in which it depended upon the turn and disposition which God
 should be pleased to give to the spirits of men: may this just
 and pious thought frequently dwell upon the hearts of the
 ministers of Christ!

Some of the prayers which the apostle so affectionately be-
 speaks were answered, and some seemed to be forgotten: Yet
 did God make what seemed the rejection of some the means
 of answering the rest. He was for a while delivered into the
 hands of those in Judea who believed not; and this providence,
 which might have seemed an invincible obstacle to his design,
 proved the occasion of bringing him to Rome, and promoted
 the success of his ministry there.

33 Let us adore the God of grace and peace, who works the

most important ends by methods to us unthought of; and let us be greatly cautious that we do not rashly judge that he hath rejected our prayers, because we do not see them answered in that particular way which might have been more agreeable to our own wishes.

SECT. XXXIV.

The apostle, after recommending Phebe to the Romans, particularly salutes several of his friends resident among them. Rom. xvi. 1—16.

ROMANS XVI. 1.

I COMMEND unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is in Cenchrea:

ROMANS XVI. 1.

HAVING thus dispatched the substance of my epistle, I would add, by way of postscript, something relating to a few particular Christian friends, with us or with you: and first would recommend to you the bearer of this epistle, *Phebe our sister, who is not only partaker with us in the profession of the gospel, but in the office of a stated servant or deaconess^a of the church in Cenchrea,^b in the neighbourhood of which I write to you. And I desire² that you would entertain her, in regard to her relation to the Lord Jesus Christ, our common Saviour, with all Christian affection, and in a manner becoming those that profess themselves saints, separated from the world to the honour of his name; and that you would assist her in any thing in which she may need it of you; for I can assure you she has been, in her office, an helper of many, and of myself in particular; on which account she is well worthy of your regard, and will I hope meet with a very kind reception from all that love me or have any concern for the common cause.*

SECT. XXXIV.
Rom. xvi. 1.

² That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

³ Greet Priscilla I desire you would also salute the pious *Priscilla and her worthy consort Aquila,^c who have*

^a A stated servant or deaconess.] Compare 1 Tim. v. 9. That there were some grave and pious matrons engaged in such an office in the primitive church, is, I think, very apparent from these places: but it is obvious there were circumstances which rendered such sort of servants much more useful and necessary in the churches at that time, than they would now generally be.

^b The church in Cenchrea.] As Paul mentions the church in Cenchrea as distinct from that at Corinth, though Cenchrea lay in the suburbs of it, I must submit to the candid reader, whether it be not probable that it had a distinct pastor or bishop of its own.

^c Priscilla and Aquila.] This excellent couple appear, by this passage, to be returned to Rome, on the ceasing of that

SECT. both deserved the name of *my fellow-labourers* and Aquila, my help-
 XXXIV. in Christ Jesus, as they have each of them, ac- ers in Christ Jesus:
 Rom. cording to their different stations and charac-
 xvi. 3. ters, been ready to do their utmost to promote

4 the interest of the gospel amongst us. And in- 4 (Who have for my
 deed they are *persons who, for the preservation* life laid down their
of my life, exposed to so many tumultuous dan- own necks: unto
gers, (Acts xviii. 6, 7, 12, 13.) have, as it were, whom not only I
laid down their own necks, that is, offered them- give thanks, but also
selves to the extremest dangers; to whom there- all the churches of
fore I do not only owe my own personal thanks, the Gentiles.)

5 an advocate. You will also, I hope, present my 5 Likewise greet the
 sincere and affectionate salutation to the church church that is in their
 that is in their house; as I know there are several house. Salute my
 other Christians with them, resident in the fami- well-beloved Epenet-
 ly, or meeting them for social worship there. us, who is the first-
 Salute also my beloved Epenetus, who is one of fruits of Achaia unto
 the first-fruits of Achaia^d to Christ in the num- Christ.

6 remembrance. Salute Mary, who has taken a great 6 Greet Mary, who
 deal of pains on our account, to accommodate bestowed much la-
 me and my companions when we were in her bour on us.

7 neighbourhood. Salute Andronicus^e and Junias 7 Salute Androni-
 my kinsmen, and dear in the bond of Christian cus and Junia my
 fellowship and united sufferings too, having kinsmen and my fel-
 once been my fellow-prisoners; who were early low-prisoners, who
 in great reputation among the apostles,^f and were are of note among
 the apostles, who al-

edict against the Jews which had driven them from thence, in the reign of Claudius, Acts xviii. 2. Priscilla seems to have been a woman of great note, and probably of distinguished genius and influence; which appears, not only from the manner in which she is here named, but also from the edification which the eloquent Apollos received from her instructions, in concurrence with those of her husband.

^d The first-fruits, &c.] It is very probable he might be converted at the same time with Stephanas, called also the first-fruits of Achaia, (1 Cor. xvi. 15.) for there is no manner of necessity to understand by that expression, the very first Christian convert. Indeed it is possible Epenetus might be one of that happy family to which this appellation is given.

^e Andronicus, &c.] Dr. Jenkins very justly observes that this list of names can be no objection at all to the authority of this epistle; for it might be an encouragement to the persons thus particularly mentioned, might conciliate some additional respect to them, whereby their usefulness might be promoted, and would render each of these persons a kind of witness to the genuineness of the epistle, as we may naturally suppose it was shown to each of them. Jenk. of Christianity, Vol. II. p. 37.

^f In reputation among the apostles.] Diodati thinks that apostles here signifies evangelists; and that the meaning is, that these persons were noted messengers of the churches, 2 Cor. viii. 23; Phil. ii. 25. But I rather apprehend with Mr. Craddock, (Apost. Hist. p. 43,) that they were

so were in Christ before me.

8 Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.

9 Salute Urbane our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

10 Salute Apelles, approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.

11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

13 Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

also happy in being joined to the church of Christ before me; and therefore, though once the object of my furious persecuting zeal, are now honoured and beloved as my elder brethren in the Lord. Salute Amplias, my beloved in the Lord, for whom I have a most affectionate friendship, cemented in the bonds of mutual faith and love. Salute also Urbanus, my fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ, to the service of which he is so faithfully devoted, and with him my beloved Stachys, of whose friendship I cannot but retain an affectionate remembrance. Salute Apelles, whose long-experienced worth renders him thoroughly approved in the cause of Christ, as a disciple of a character undoubtedly honourable. Salute also those [of the family] of Aristobulus,^g and assure the Christians that hold the lowest station in it, that they are not forgotten by me. Salute my cousin Herodian, still dearer to me in the ties of grace than in those of nature; and those belonging to [the household of] Narcissus, who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Salute those excellent women Tryphena and Tryphosa, who, according to their stations, have laboured with great diligence in the service of the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, who distinguished herself among many who were faithful and diligent; so that it may properly be said, she laboured much in the Lord. Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord, whom I esteem as a Christian of a most excellent character; and pay the most affectionate respects in my name to his mother and mine;^h for so I may

SECT.
XXXIV.
Rom.
xvi. 7.

some early converts who had been known and much esteemed by the apostles before the dispersion occasioned by the death of Stephen, (Acts viii. 2.) and if so, perhaps Paul might once have been active in persecuting them, and have learned their names at first, with an hostile intent of hunting them down to destruction.

^g Those [of the family] of Aristobulus.] The Roman church hath consecrated days to the honour of many of the saints mentioned in this chapter, whom they declare, I know not on what sufficient authority, to have been martyrs. See L'Euf. Pref. to the Romans, p. 6, 7. To these they have added Aristobulus and Narcissus, though there is no certain evi-

dence that they were Christians. It seems most probable they were persons of high rank who had each a great family of slaves; and some of them being Christian converts, the apostle would not forget them, low as their rank in life was, when he was saluting his brethren in so particular a manner. We may observe what a regard the apostle had for foreign churches, when he informed himself of the names, circumstances, and abodes of so many then in Rome.

^h His mother and mine.] Hence some have thought that Rufus was at least half-brother to Paul; but perhaps he might in this expression refer to the maternal care this good woman had taken of him.

SECT. call her, on account of that maternal tenderness

XXXIV. and care which she has often shown towards me.

Rom. *Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas,*
xvi. 14. *Hermes, and all the brethren with them, as if* every one of them had been particularly named.

15 *Salute Philologus and Julius, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the other sincere saints and Christiansⁱ that are with them;* whom, with the rest of the persons that I have mentioned, I most sincerely honour and love.

16 In a word, whether you be Jews or Gentiles, when you meet at your assemblies *salute one another with a holy kiss;^k* and take care that the kiss which you give to each other at the conclusion of your worship, be expressive of a pure and undissembled affection, and conducted with the gravest and most decent circumstances. All the churches of Christ in these parts *salute you;* as they, with me, have heard of the eminent figure you make in religion, and the many excellent persons who are resident among you.

14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

IMPROVEMENT.

THOUGH so much of this section be a mere catalogue of names, it is not without its moral and religious instruction. We see in it the good heart of the apostle; how full he was of the sentiments of Christian friendship; how solicitous he was to express his esteem and love for his brethren in the Lord. And God hath made him the means of transmitting to posterity the memorials of many excellent persons of whom we nowhere else read or hear any thing: of whom all that we know is, that they were such as deserved the particular affection of St. Paul, and were professors of the gospel at Rome in the reign of a very worthless and wicked prince, under whom it is highly probable that some of them suffered martyrdom for Christ.

His large heart opened to embrace them all, whether by birth Jews or Gentiles: and as they shared in his salutations, we cannot doubt but they shared in his prayers too. We find some of

ⁱ *All the saints, &c.*] Calvin and others very justly observe, that had Peter been now at Rome, he would undoubtedly have been named; since no one in this numerous catalogue was of a dignity and eminence by any means comparable to him; and yet, if he were not there at this time, the whole tradition of the Roman bishops, as the Roman church delivers it, fails in the most fundamental article of all.

^k *A holy kiss.*] The custom of thus

saluting each other was borrowed from the Jewish synagogue; and as chastely and prudently as it was managed, it seems to have been the occasion of those false and scandalous reports which were so industriously propagated among the heathen, of the adulterous and incestuous practices in Christian assemblies; on which account it seems to have been laid aside very early.

these pious and much-esteemed friends of the apostle, were wo-
men, of whom he speaks with great regard, as of persons whom
divine grace had made very useful in the church; who had been
helpers of many, and particularly of him; who had laboured, yea,
laboured much in the Lord. Let not that sex therefore think
that it is cut off from the service of Christ because the ministry
is appropriated to men. Eminently useful have many of them
been. The most valuable ministers have often been assisted by
them in the success of their work, while their pious care, under
the restraint of the strictest modesty and decorum, has happily
and effectually influenced children, servants, and young friends;
yea, has been the means of sowing the seeds of religion in ten-
der minds, before they have been capable of coming under mi-
nisterial care.

Generous was the zeal which Aquila and Priscilla showed in
exposing even their own lives in the defence of this holy apostle.
Great obligations did they thereby lay upon all the churches of
the Gentiles, and on us, who, at this distance of time, receive
so many blessings from the longer continuance of St. Paul's life,
which they were ready so heroically to defend at the hazard of
their own.

Truly valuable were these mutual friendships, of which zeal
for Christ was the common bond; lasting, and indeed everlast-
ing. These excellent persons are doubtless the companions of
Paul in glory now, and will many of them be his crown in the
day of the Lord. Some of them indeed were in Christ before
him, and he speaks of it as peculiarly to their honour. Let
those who were early in Christ rejoice in the thought. Let
those who came later into his church be exhorted to exert them-
selves with the greater vigour in his service, that they may re-
cover the time they have lost: and let us all learn to esteem it
as the most substantial proof of our love to those who are pecu-
liarly dear to us, to show, upon all occasions, how sincerely we
wish that they may early form an acquaintance with Christ; that
they may constantly walk in him, and grow up in all things in
him, as our common Head.

SECT. XXXV.

*The apostle concludes with other salutations, and a necessary caution
against those who would divide the church, together with a doxology
suited to the general purport of what he had been writing. Rom. xvi.
17, to the end.*

ROMANS XVI. 17.

ROMANS XVI. 17.

NOW I beseech **A**ND now, having dispatched those saluta-
tions which Christian friendship has largely

SECT. dictated, let me conclude my epistle to you you, brethren, mark
 XXXV. with a few words of additional advice. And them which cause di-
 I would particularly exhort you, brethren, to visions and offences,
 Rom. have your eyes upon, and to mark out for the contrary to the doc-
 xvi. 17. caution of others, those persons, whether in pub- trine which ye have
 lished, and avoid
 lic or private life, which cause divisions and of- them.
 fences [among you,] by false doctrines, factious
 tempers, and scandalous lives: therein doing
 contrary to that pure, certain, and uniting doc-
 trine which you have learned of us, the apostles
 of Jesus Christ, who have been commissioned
 by him as the authentic teachers of his gospel.
 And when you have discovered such pernicious
 seducers, avoid them, so as to have no intimate
 converse with them, nor even to permit them
 to continue in your communion, if they will not
 be reclaimed by the milder methods of brother-

18ly admonition. For you may be assured that
 such, whatever they may pretend, serve not the
 Lord Jesus Christ, under whose commission
 we so apparently act, and the nature of whose
 religion is so holy and benevolent: but, on the
 contrary, it is plain they serve their own belly;
 they have only their own secular interest in view,
 and hope to gain some temporal advantage by
 setting themselves up as heads of parties among
 you; and by fair speeches and flattering forms of
 address,^a they deceive the hearts of the innocent
 and well-meaning, and lead them into snares of
 which they are little aware.

18 For they that
 are such, serve not
 our Lord Jesus Christ,
 but their own belly;
 and by good words
 and fair speeches de-
 ceive the hearts of
 the simple.

19 It is very possible, that having done so much
 mischief here at Corinth and at other places,
 they may also make some attempts upon you,
 especially considering the figure you make in
 the Christian world; but I trust their endeavours
 will be unsuccessful, for the report of your ex-
 emplary obedience to the dictates of our holy re-
 ligion is come abroad unto all; therefore I re-
 joice on your account, in hope you will overcome
 this and every other danger, and maintain the
 good character you have already gained. But I
 give you this caution out of my abundant

19 For your obe-
 dience is come abroad
 unto all men. I am
 glad therefore on
 your behalf: but yet

^a Flattering forms of address.] *Eulogia*, periphrasis. We see here what these
 in this connection, has a force which I weapons are which those false apostles
 knew not how to express but by this opposed to the miracles of the true.

I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil:

tenderness and care; because *I am desirous you may be wise and sagacious with respect to every opportunity of practising and maintaining that which is good, and as simple as possible with regard to that which is evil*; perfectly free from all ill views and designs of every kind. And I know how much the insinuations of those men tend to destroy those benevolent dispositions which should ever reign in the hearts of Christians, and to fill them with such prejudices against each other as may produce mutual injuries.

SECT.
XXXV.
Rom.
xvi. 19.

20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

And I have an agreeable persuasion that you will take care to maintain this happy mixture of innocence and prudence, and will succeed in that care. Yes, my brethren, I am well assured that *the God of peace*, from whom we derive all our peace and happiness, and who delights in seeing this peaceful temper prevail among his servants, *will quickly bruise Satan under your feet*; will defeat the artifices by which the great enemy of God and men is endeavouring to insinuate himself into the church, and to infuse his own malignant spirit into its members. God will enable you, animated by the first great promise, (Gen. iii. 15.) which you have seen so illustriously fulfilled, to trample on the sly deceiver, as on a wounded serpent whose head your great Leader hath already crushed. And for this purpose, *may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, which hath already been in so considerable a degree imparted to you, [*be*] still more constantly and abundantly *with you!* Amen.

21 Timotheus my work-fellow, and Lucius, and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

I add by way of postscript, that *Timothy my pious and zealous fellow-labourer*, to whose affection I am so much obliged, and *Lucius, and Jason and Sosipater*, the messengers of the church at Berea,^b and both of them *my kinsmen*, salute you with sincere Christian friendship.

22 I Tertius, who wrote this epistle,

I Tertius, or Silas, who wrote [this] epistle, 22 while the apostle Paul dictated it to me,^c as

^b *Sosipater.*] As it appears from Acts xx. 4, that Sosipater was with St. Paul when he travelled in Greece, in the year 58, this is one argument for fixing the date of this epistle to that year.

^c *Who wrote this epistle, &c.*] St. Paul

seems not himself to have been very well versed in the Greek characters, Gal. vi. 11: compare 1 Cor. xvi. 21. He therefore made use of the hand of Silas, or, as the Latin would express his name, Tertius, who wrote what the apostle dictat-

180 *He adds the salutations of some other Christian friends;*

SECT. his secretary, do also most affectionately salute you in the Lord.
 XXXV. you in the Lord.

Rom.
 xvi. 23.

The generous Gaius, who is my host, and indeed, I may say, that of the whole church, so ready is he to every act of hospitality and goodness, salutes you, [and] Erastus the steward of the city [also] salutes you; and so doth one Quartus, who, though you may not particularly know him, is a Christian brother,^d whose name I think worthy of being inserted.

23 Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

24 Once more receive my repeated good wishes that the best of all blessings may attend you; even that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with you all: to which I again put my cordial Amen.

24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

25 Now, let me sum up all with ascribing praise to the great Author of all the blessings of which I have been writing; even to him, who, as he has called you to participate these invaluable blessings, is able to strengthen you^e in every virtuous disposition and good resolution; according to the tenor of my gospel, even the preaching of Jesus Christ, as our only and almighty Saviour, whom I proclaim, wherever I come, to Gentiles as well as to Jews: a gospel which, however it is opposed as contrary, is indeed most exactly agreeable to the revelation which God has now been pleased to make of that ministry in ancient times kept in silence,^f and never before

25 Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, (according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

ed; and I submit to consideration, whether some of the intricate and some of the unfinished sentences which we meet with in these epistles, might not be owing to this method of writing by an amanuensis. They whose variety of business has obliged them to dictate to others, and use their pens in such a manner, will be very sensible this is no absurd or very improbable conjecture. Compare Jerem. xxxvi. 17, 18, as an instance of a similar nature.

^d A brother.] Mr. Pierce thinks this expression intimates that he was a Christian minister. Compare Phil. iv. 21, 22; but I cannot say it appears sufficiently evident.

^e Now to him, &c.] This doxology is found in many copies at the end of the xivth chapter, and in the Alexandrian MS. is inserted both there and here. Jerome says that Marcian rejected the two last chapters, as contrary to his opinion; and

Sir Norton Knatchbull conjectures, that in order to prevent any suspicion as if the epistle ended with the xivth chapter, some orthodox Christian transferred this passage from thence, which he supposes to have been its true place. Dr. Mills is of the same opinion; and supposes the two last chapters to have been added by way of postscript, as the apostle had time before he sent it away. All the other epistles of Paul end with the benediction.

^f Mystery, &c.] Many commentators explain these verses as referring to the calling of the Gentiles into the church, and then some of them suppose the *χρῆνος αἰώνιος* to refer to the division of time by jubilees; but it is certain the words will make good and weighty sense on the different interpretations we have given; and as the jubilees so early grew into neglect among the Jews, it would be less natural to suppose the periods of time they measured to be designed here,

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith :)

27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

so fully exhibited: *But*, adored be his goodness, it is now made manifest according to the tenor of the prophetic scriptures, according to the commandment of the eternal God. And it is not only discovered to us by the Spirit, but publicly made known to all the Gentile nations, as well as the people of Israel, for the obedience of faith; that they, firmly believing it, may yield a correspondent practical submission to it, and so obtain by it everlasting salvation; subjecting themselves in all things to the sacred authority of the only-wise God, who has so prudently contrived and so effectually executed this grand scheme. To him, on the whole, [be] glory by Jesus Christ, in all the churches, and in the general assembly, to endless ages! Amen.

SECT.
XXXV.
Rom.
xvi. 26.

IMPROVEMENT.

WORTHY are these concluding words of being deeply engraven on every heart. The gospel was a mystery long concealed in the breast of the Divine wisdom, and opened but by imperfect hints, even to the church itself, in former ages. Let us be humbly thankful that it is now made manifest, and that we are among the nations who are called to the obedience of the faith. Let us be solicitous to answer that call; and if we have already done it in any measure, let us remember we are still surrounded with many snares and dangers, so that we have continual need of being strengthened and confirmed by him who hath done us the honour to call us into the fellowship of his gospel. Let us walk worthy of it, and faithfully endeavour to advance its interests in a noble superiority to all those secular and mercenary motives by which bad men, under a Christian profession, are often influenced, and in consequence of which they often abuse even the ministry of religion to the most infamous purposes.

Let us show how thoroughly we have imbibed the spirit of this divine dispensation, by the generosity of our sentiments; guarding both against scandals and divisions, and aiming in wisdom, integrity and love, both to unite and edify the body of Christ. Satan will indeed lay discouragements and stumbling-blocks in our way, and perhaps may sometimes use very subtle arts to promote discord and division among those who ought to be most dear to each other in the bonds of the Lord. But let us use a holy caution, and commit ourselves cheerfully to the Divine keeping, and we may humbly hope that the God of peace will make us victorious over all the artifice and power of our spiritual enemies, and will shortly bruise Satan under our feet.

SECT. Let us humbly hope that he will, through the grace of our
 XXXV. Lord Jesus Christ, in virtue of that great original promise which
 ——— was given to cheer our first parents when they lay under their
 deep distress and heavy load of new-contracted guilt. (Gen.
 iii. 13.) And as we see how God hath taken the subtle in his
 own craftiness, and triumphed over Satan by that event which
 he laboured to accomplish as his own triumph, even the death
 Ver. 27. of our Divine Redeemer; let us ascribe to him, as the only wise
 God, everlasting glory. And oh that we may join with all the
 redeemed world in this ascription, when the accuser of the bre-
 thren, the great enemy of God and man, with all his adherepts
 and instruments, shall be cast out for ever! Amen.

N. B.—A note added to the end of this epistle says that *it was written to the Ro-
 mans from Corinth, by Phebe, servant of the church at Cenchrea.* Part of this the first
 verse of this last chapter justifies; but as the most ancient manuscripts have not
 these notes, and some of them are plainly contrary to some passages in the epis-
 tle to which they are affixed, they are to be esteemed of no authority.

THE END OF THE FAMILY EXPOSITOR ON THE ROMANS.

THE
FAMILY EXPOSITOR:
OR,
A PARAPHRASE
ON THE
FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE
CORINTHIANS;
*WITH CRITICAL NOTES,
AND A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF EACH SECTION.*

NOTIONEN-LEHRE

von

LEONHARD ECKHART

LEIPZIG

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

Paraphrase and Notes

ON THE

FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

THE Apostle Paul had been the instrument, in the hand of God, of planting a numerous Christian church, chiefly of Gentile converts, at Corinth; where his ministry was so successful, that he continued there near two years. (Acts xviii. 1—18.) Corinth was a city of Achaia, situated on the isthmus which joins Peloponnesus (now called the Morea,) to the rest of Greece. From the convenience of its situation for commerce, it abounded in riches, and was furnished with all the accommodations, with all the elegancies and superfluities of life. This, by too natural a consequence, led its inhabitants into luxury, lewdness, and all manner of vice; and they were accordingly infamous even to a proverb.

About the space of three years after the apostle had left Corinth to preach the gospel in other parts of Greece, he had occasion to write this Epistle to the Corinthians; which he accordingly wrote from Ephesus, about the year 57, the third of the Emperor Nero. See Vol. III. sect. 42, note d, and sect. 44, note a.

The reason for which this epistle was written, was to answer some important queries proposed by the Corinthians, and correct the various criminal irregularities and disorders of which they were guilty.

In correcting the abuses with which they were chargeable,

The *first* article on which the apostle thought himself obliged to insist, related to the *parties* and *factions* into which they were fallen, and the opposition which was made by some of them to his own apostolical mission. On this head he largely discourses in the first four chapters; introducing the epistle with an affectionate address to the Corinthian converts, in which he congratulates them on the rich variety of gifts and graces God had bestowed upon them, and animates their hopes of his continued favour in the Lord Jesus Christ, even till the day of his final appearance: (Chap. i. 1—9.) And then, expressing his great concern on account of their animosities and factions, he expostulates with them on the unreasonableness of setting up Christian ministers as heads of parties, when they were under such strong engagements to Christ as their common Saviour and Master. (Ver. 10—16.) And as he well knew that a fond regard to eloquence and philosophy, to which some of the Corinthian teachers made high pretensions, was one great occasion of their divisions, he sets himself to show how little stress was to be laid upon them; which he illustrates by the choice that God had made of gospel preachers entirely destitute of these boasted accomplishments. (Ver. 17, to the end.) The apostle further explains the reasons for which he had declined all ostentation of eloquence when he came among the Corinthians, and particularly insists on the extraordinary nature of the facts and doctrines he was to teach, which were of a much higher original than any discoveries which human wit or learning could make, and were to be traced up to the immediate teachings of the Holy Spirit; their nature being so wonderful that it was difficult for the corrupted minds of men to receive them, even when they were taught. (Chap. ii. throughout.) After this the apostle more directly comes to the case of their animosities and divisions, and reproves their carnality in contending about human teachers, and urges many important considerations to cure them of so unbecoming a temper. (Chap. iii. 1—9.) Reminding

them, for this purpose, of the great trial which every man's work must undergo, the guilt of polluting by unhallowed divisions the temple of God, the vanity of human wisdom in his sight, and of glorying in men, since ministers and all things are appointed for the common benefit of believers. (Ver. 10, to the end.) The apostle farther discourses with the same view of the nature of the ministerial office, reminds them of the final judgment of him who searcheth all hearts, and the obligation they were under to the Divine goodness for every advantage by which they were distinguished from others: (Chap. iv. 1—7.) And as a particular opposition had been made in the Corinthian church to himself, he represents the hardships and dangers to which he and his brethren had been and were exposed in the service of the gospel, and the obligations which he had in an especial manner laid upon them; warning them not to force him upon severities which he was very unwilling to use. (Ver. 8, to the end.) And having thus discoursed with admirable wisdom, faithfulness, and zeal, he dismisses, for the present, this part of his subject; which, on account of his personal concern in it, was attended with circumstances of peculiar delicacy.

The *second* topic which the apostle considers, was the case of a notorious offender in the Corinthian church, who was guilty of most scandalous *incest* with his father's wife. Animated, therefore, with a warm zeal for the honour of Christ, for the purity and credit of the Christian church, with a benevolent concern for the conviction of the offender, and that others might be deterred from the like enormous practices, he exhorts them, upon these principles, to beware of all unnecessary connection with him, and to exclude him from Christian communion. (Chap. v. throughout.)

The *third* article which, in this epistle, St. Paul exhibits against the Corinthians, is, that by a covetous and litigious temper they were led, contrary to the rules of Christian prudence and love, and sometimes contrary even to the principles of justice, to prosecute their brethren in the heathen courts. This he solemnly censures and condemns, and closes what he offers upon this head,

by warning them of the sad consequences that would attend the indulgence of those criminal dispositions in which Christianity found them, and from which it was intended to deliver them. (Chap. vi. 1—11.)

In the *fourth* place, the Apostle Paul cautions them against the sin of *fornication*, to which they had been, in their Gentile state, greatly addicted. And it should seem, that having been formerly wont to look upon this heinous crime as lawful, there were even now some among them who reckoned it among the things indifferent, and that they were not in general sufficiently convinced of its enormity. He therefore introduces what he proposed to say on this subject, with some useful reflections on things really indifferent, and then illustrates the heinous evil of fornication, from views peculiar to the Christian religion. (Ver. 12, to the end.)

Having thus largely, and with great faithfulness and plainness, corrected some sad disorders with which the Corinthians were chargeable,

The apostle proceeds to the other main end of his epistle, namely, to answer certain important questions which it seems the Corinthians had proposed. And here,

He determines, *first*, Those which related to the *marriage state*. Some questions upon this would naturally arise among the first converts to Christianity, as, Whether they should disown and withdraw from their partners if they continued unbelievers? And, Whether it was good to marry in the present circumstances of the church? when the contracting new and especially such near alliances in those times of persecution, would involve in particular difficulties those who should enter into the marriage relation, which they might, notwithstanding, judge it proper for other reasons to do. Now the apostle shows, at his entrance upon this subject, that in some circumstances the marriage state should be entered into and continued in, but in others foreborn, particularly at that time; and enjoins wives not to depart from their husbands and husbands not to dismiss their wives: (Chap. vii. 1—11.) He then shows that marriages were not to be dissolved, as some thought they might, on account of a difference in religion; and

very properly urges in the general, contentment with the stations in which they were called, and a concern to serve God in their proper condition, whether married or single, bound or free. (Ver. 12—24.) And with regard to single persons, he asserts the inexpediency of their marrying in the circumstances of the church at that juncture, inculcating a serious sense of the shortness of time, as the best remedy against inordinate attachment to any secular interest. (Ver. 25, to the end.)

A *second* query which the Corinthians had proposed to the apostle to be resolved, was, How far they might comply with their heathen neighbours in *eating things sacrificed to idols*? St. Paul upon this reminds them, that though all Christians might well be supposed to know the vanity of those imaginary deities to which the sacrifices were offered, yet it might prove to some an occasion of grief and scandal, that the professors of Christianity should partake of those sacrifices in their temple; which therefore charity would require them by all means to avoid. (Chap. viii. throughout.) And having, in this instance, urged them to a Christian condescension to their brethren, that he might enforce the principle more strongly, by his own condescension to the weak in waving to accept of a maintenance from the Corinthians, he introduces what he had to say upon this head, with a short discourse on the right which, as a gospel minister, he really had to be supported by those among whom he laboured; which he argues both from natural equity and scripture principles: (Chap. ix. 1—14.) He then proceeds to show, that out of tenderness to them, and to prevent exceptions to the gospel, he had waved this right, and had been cautious upon all occasions to avoid offence, by exercising self-denial, which he illustrates by a very expressive simile taken from those who contended in the Grecian games. (Ver. 15, to the end.) And to recommend this self-denial and holy caution to the Corinthians, he represents the privileges which Israel of old enjoyed, and the displeasure which, notwithstanding this, God manifested against them in the wilderness, when they indulged their irregular and luxurious desires, and in contempt of the *manna*,

lusted after quails; an example proper to put the Corinthians in mind of the danger they ran of incurring the Divine displeasure, if they should be induced, for the sake of gratifying a luxurious appetite, to partake of entertainments upon *things offered to idols* in the heathen temples. (Chap. x. 1—13.) That he might therefore caution them against all approaches to idolatry, he particularly argues, from that communion which as Christians they had with Christ at his table, that they ought to keep at the remotest distance from what might justly be called having communion with devils. (Ver. 14—22.) After which he lays down more particular directions as to the cases and circumstances in which *things sacrificed to idols* might or might not lawfully be eaten; and urges further considerations to engage them willingly to resign their own gratification, for the glory of God and the good of their brethren. (Ver. 23, to the end; chap. xi. 1.)

The apostle now proceeds to a *third* query, concerning the manner in which *women* should deliver any thing in public, when by a divine impulse called to it. And after having settled this point, he particularly corrects the indecency of women's prophesying with their head uncovered. (Ver. 2—16.) Being thus led to consider circumstances which attended the Christian worship, he takes the occasion naturally afforded, of introducing a discourse upon several abuses among them of a higher nature, with respect to the public celebration of the Lord's Supper; leading back their views to its original institution, and inferring from thence the danger of profaning it in the manner they did. (Ver. 17, to the end.) Being thus naturally, and as it were accidentally, brought to take notice again of the corruptions prevailing in the Corinthian church, the apostle makes some remarks upon their abuse of the *spiritual gifts*; observing that they all proceed from the same sacred agent, and are intended for the edification of the same body in which all Christians are united. (Chap. xii. 1—13.) Inculcating humility in the use of those gifts, and that mutual affection which the Corinthians needed to be taught, he pursues the allegory further, and represents Christians

as so united in one body as to have entirely the same interest; and insists on a tender care of the least member, from its subserviency to the good of the whole. (Ver. 15, to the end.) And to engage the Corinthians to cultivate love, as more important than the gifts about which they contended, he gives a lovely description of that excellent grace; concluding it with a reflection on its perpetual duration, in which it exceeds even faith and hope. (Chap. xiii. throughout.) After thus inculcating charity and love, a grace which they needed much to adorn their Christian profession and direct the exercise of their spiritual gifts, the apostle particularly cautions them against their prevailing vain ostentation of the gift of tongues, and reasons with them concerning the absurdity of the manner in which they, some of them at least, abused that gift. (Chap. xiv. 1—19.) And adds, upon the whole, proper motives to prevent that abuse. (Ver. 20, to the end.)

Some among the Corinthians doubted and others denied *the resurrection of the dead*. To prove and establish, therefore, this great and peculiar article of the Christian faith, the Apostle Paul makes some remarks on the certainty and importance of the resurrection of Christ: (Chap. xv. 1—11.) And infers from the resurrection of Christ, the certainty of the *resurrection of the dead*; urging the importance of this grand fundamental doctrine of Christianity, and mentioning, in the series of his argument, that surrender of the mediatorial kingdom which Christ, at the consummation of all things, shall make to the Father. (Ver. 12—34.) After which he answers objections to the resurrection, drawn from our not being able to conceive of the particular manner in which it shall be effected; and concludes with urging this doctrine, as a noble incentive to the greatest readiness and the warmest zeal in religion. (Ver. 25, to the end.)

THIS is the connection of the several parts of this excellent epistle, and a sketch of the apostle's design, which was to correct the corruptions and abuses and answer some queries of the Corinthian church. And

though he hath not throughout discussed these two points separately, and with the exactness of systematical method, yet he hath handled his subject in a more natural manner, and given a masterly specimen of the freedom usual in epistolary writings.—Before he concludes, he gives some advice to the Corinthian church, relating to the collection proposed to be made for the poor saints in Judea: (Chap. xvi. 1—12.) And then closes all with some particular salutations and directions, with general exhortations to courage and love, a solemn benediction to true Christians, and an awful anathema against those who were destitute of love to our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ver. 13, to the end of the epistle.)

Paraphrase and Notes

ON THE

FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

SECT. I.

The apostle introduces his epistle with a most affectionate and suitable salutation, in which he congratulates the Corinthians on the rich variety of gifts and graces which God had bestowed upon them, and animates their hope of his continued favour in the Lord Jesus Christ, even till the day of his final appearance. 1 Cor. i. 1—9.

1 COR. i. 1.

PAUL, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

1 CORINTHIANS I. 1.

PAUL, who was in so peculiar a manner called [to be] an apostle^a of Jesus Christ, not undertaking that office of himself, but invested with it by the most express declaration of the will of God, signified at the time of that miraculous interposition of which you have so often heard; and Sosthenes,^b so well known unto you, whom I esteem as a dear brother, concur in writing

SECT.
I.

1 Cor.
i. 1.

^a Called to be an apostle.] There is great propriety in every clause of the salutation prefixed to this epistle, and particularly in this, as there were those in the church of Corinth who affected to call the authority of his mission into question.

^b Sosthenes.] This was a Corinthian

minister who attended Paul in his travels. (Compare Acts xviii. 17.) It was both humility and prudence in the apostle thus to join his name with his own, in an epistle in which it was necessary to deal so plainly with them, and to remonstrate against so many irregularities.

- SECT. this epistle to the church of God which is in
 I. the rich, populous, and learned city of *Corinth*,
 whose chief glory it is that they (if they are
 1 Cor. what their Christian profession speaks them to
 i. 2. be,) are *sanctified in vital union with Christ Je-
 sus*,^c as well as *called with an external vocation*,
 by which they are separated from the rest of
 the world [as] the *saints of God*. And when
 we express our affectionate regard to you, and
 our good wishes for your edification and com-
 fort, we extend them to *all that in every place*^d
invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,^e
 whom we, and all true Christians, join in ac-
 knowledging and adoring as *their [Lord] and*
 3 *ours*. May you experimentally know more of
 the privileges and blessings of his gospel; and
 for that purpose, [may] *grace and peace [be] with*
you, that abundance of Divine influence which
 may establish your peace and multiply your
 prosperity; even *from God*, the original foun-
 tain of all blessings, whom we are now taught
 to look upon as *our reconciled and gracious*
Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord, that
 anointed and exalted Saviour by whom we re-
 ceive the adoption, and through whose hands
 all its blessings are communicated to us.
- 4 I cannot address you, my dear brethren, with-
 out assuring you in the first place, that *I always*
give humble thanks to my God on your account,
 whenever I mention you before him in prayer,
 as I frequently do, *for the abundant grace of*
God given unto you in Christ Jesus, by virtue of
 which you have been received into the Chris-
 5 tian church, and are made ornaments to it. For
- 2 Unto the church
 of God which is at
 Corinth, to them that
 are sanctified in
 Christ Jesus, called
 to be saints, with all
 that in every place
 call upon the name
 of Jesus Christ our
 Lord, both theirs and
 ours:
- 3 Grace be unto
 you, and peace from
 God our Father, and
 from the Lord Jesus
 Christ.
- 4 I thank my God
 always on your be-
 half, for the grace of
 God which is given
 you by Jesus Christ:
- 5 That in every

^c *Sanctified in Christ Jesus.*] I cannot agree with Mr. Locke, in concluding that this must signify only an *external separation of the true religion*, as the Jews were *externally* a holy people, 1 Pet. ii. 8, 9, 10. It seems rather to intimate the persuasion which he had, that notwithstanding some lamented irregularities among them, which he was faithfully solicitous to reform, they were, in the general, a body of sincere Christians, and the exceptions comparatively few.

^d *With all that in every place, &c.*] Nothing could better suit the candid and catholic views which Paul was so much

concerned to promote in this epistle, than this declaration of his good wishes for *every true Christian* upon earth, whether Jew or Gentile, *learned or unlearned*, Greek or Barbarian. To limit it, as Grotius, L'Enfant, and some others would do, to the Christians in Achaia, is to spoil all the *strength and beauty* of the sentiment.

^e *Invoke the name, &c.*] This strongly implies, that it might well be taken for granted that every true Christian would often pray to Christ, as well as address the Father in his name.

thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge:

6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you.

7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

ever adored be his holy name, *that in all things ye are enriched in him*^f with a variety of gifts and graces, and particularly, that ye are made copious *in all utterance, and ready [in] all knowledge* of spiritual and divine things: *As the testimony* which I bore to the gospel of Christ, when I abode so long at Corinth, *was confirmed among you*^g by such various communications of the Spirit, in consequence of which you became living witnesses of it to all who knew you. *So that you are deficient in no gift* which can render you useful in his church, while you are *waiting for the glorious manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ*, in connection with which, I hope, you will always consider this extraordinary furniture for his service, and improve it so as to advance your preparation for that day: Still^h keeping up an humble dependence on him, *who, if you faithfully apply to him for the continued communication of his almighty aid, will confirm you to the end; [so that] when so many others shall be condemned, [ye may be] presented blameless and irreproachable in the great day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*^h Fear not, my brethren, but this blessed day will come, and bring with it those glories which we have so long been taught to expect. Fear not but divine grace will still be effectual to bear you through all difficulties in your way to it; for *God [is] faithful, by whom you were called into the communion and society of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord*, that you may participate of the blessings he hath purchased; the grand promises of whose kingdom, ye know, refer to that illustrious day of which I have been speaking. Be therefore courageous and cheerful in the assured expectation of it.

SECT.
I.
1 Cor.
i. 5.

^f *That ye are enriched, &c.]* These respectful congratulations and acknowledgments of the things in which they did rarely excel, had a most happy tendency to soften their minds, and to dispose them the better to receive the plain reproofs he was going to give them, and which, in their circumstances, faithful love extorted from him.

^g *Confirmed among you.]* As they could not but know they had received these gifts by the hand of Paul, this expres-

sion suggests a rational and tender argument to reduce them to their former affection to him as their spiritual father.

^h *That ye may be blameless, &c.]* I think it would make a very low sense of this, to explain it, as some have done, that they would be preserved *if blameless*: the apostle plainly intends to encourage their hope in that grace which might enable them to persevere, that they might be found *blameless*.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. LET us remember that we also are sanctified in Christ, and

I. saints by our calling. Though we are not enriched with such
 Ver. 1. extraordinary endowments as those which were bestowed upon
 2 the Lord Jesus Christ; and let it be considered as a band of
 love to all those who join with us, to acknowledge him under
 the character of their Lord and their Saviour. Let it engage
 3 us to pray that the same grace and peace may be with them from
 God our Father, and from Jesus Christ our common Lord,
 which we wish for ourselves.

4, &c. Let our hearts be ever open to such noble sentiments of
 Christian love; not envying the gifts or endowments of others,
 but rather rejoicing in them, blessing God for them, and pray-
 6 ing that they may be largely increased; that so the testimony
 of Christ may be confirmed by the flourishing state of religion
 among his followers, than which no confirmation will probably
 carry a stronger and more affecting conviction into the hearts
 of those who observe it.

7 To quicken us to this, let us be continually waiting for the
 revelation of Jesus Christ; thinking seriously, how certainly
 and how quickly he will be revealed from heaven, to bring us
 and all our brethren to an account for the improvement we
 make of the various favours he hath conferred upon us; of
 9 which, surely, to be called into the fellowship of Christ, and the
 participation of spiritual blessings by him, is to be reckoned
 among the chief.

Let us rejoice in the fidelity of those promises which en-
 courage us to hope that he whose grace hath called us to a par-
 8 ticipation of the gospel will confirm us blameless, even until
 the day of Christ: and as we have such prospects of present
 support and comfort and of final and complete salvation from
 him, let us, like this blessed apostle, take a pleasure in sound-
 1—9 ing forth his name, and in keeping up a most affectionate re-
 membrance of him, even of Jesus Christ our Lord and our
 Saviour, in our own minds, and in those of our Christian
 brethren.

SECT. II.

The apostle expresses his great concern on account of the factions in the church of Corinth, of which he had been informed; and expostulates with them as to the unreasonableness of setting up Christian ministers as heads of parties, when they were under such strong engagements to unite in Christ as their common Saviour and Master. 1 Cor. i. 10—16.

1 Cor. i. 10.

NOW I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

1 Cor. i. 10.

I NOW hasten to the great things which I have in view in this address to you: and I must first of all beseech as well as exhort you, my brethren, by the venerable and endearing name of our Lord Jesus Christ,^a as you desire either to secure his favour or to advance his cause and interest in the world, that ye all endeavour, so far as possible, to speak the same thing, that is, that you do not unnecessarily and unkindly contradict each other, but rather maintain a peaceful unanimous temper; that [there] may be no schisms among you, nor mutual alienation of affection, but that ye be all knit together in the same mind and in the same sentiment;^b waving unnecessary controversies, debating those which are necessary with temper and candour, and delighting to speak most concerning those great and excellent things in which as Christians you cannot but be agreed, and which, if duly considered, will cement your hearts to each other in the strictest and most tender bonds.

SECT. II.

1 Cor. i. 10.

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

I urge this with the greater earnestness, because it hath been certified to me, my brethren, concerning you, by those of Chloe's [family,^c] that there are some contentions among you, which by no means become the relation wherein you stand to each other and the regard which you profess to the gospel of Christ.

12 Now this I say, Now this I say and mean by the preceding

^a By the venerable and endearing name of our Lord Jesus Christ.] This is beautifully and properly opposed to the various human names under which they were so ready to list themselves.

^b In the same mind and in the same sentiment.] It was morally impossible, considering the diversity of their educations and capacities, that they should all agree in opinion; nor could he intend that, because he does not urge any argument to reduce them to such an agreement, nor so much as declare what that one opinion

was in which he would have them agree. The words must therefore express that peaceful and unanimous temper which Christians of different opinions may and ought to maintain towards each other; which will do a much greater honour to the gospel and to human nature, than the most perfect uniformity that can be imagined.

^c Those of Chloe's [family.] Grotius supposes Fortunatus and Achaicus (mentioned chap. xvi. 17.) to have been her sons.

SECT. charge, *that*, if my information be right, there that every one of
 II. are among you various parties which avowedly you saith, I am of
 1 Cor. set themselves up as under different heads, Paul, and I of Apol-
 i. 12. though you are not yet come to an open separa- los, and I of Cephas,
 tion; so that *every one of you* lists himself un- and I of Christ.
 der one or another of those dividing names which
 are so unhappily used among you on this occa-
 sion. One, for instance, *says, I am for Paul*, ad-
 miring the plainness and purity of his doctrine;
 and a second, *I am for Apollos*, charmed with
 the eloquence and beauty of his address; and a
 third, *I am for Cephas*, the apostle of the cir-
 cumcision, who may be well called a founda-
 tion-stone in the church, as he maintains so
 strict a regard to the Mosaic ceremonies and
 the peculiar privileges of God's ancient people;
 while a fourth *says, I am for Christ*,^d whose
 superior name, and strict observation of the
 Mosaic law in his own person, unanswerably
 testify its perpetual obligation, however any of
 his ministers may regard or neglect it.

13 Give me leave now to ask, *Is Christ divided* 13 Is Christ divid-
 into as many parties as you are split into, so that ed? was Paul cruci-
 each has a distinct Saviour? or is he become fied for you? or were
 only the head of one party of his followers, that ye baptized in the
 his name should thus be appropriated by way name of Paul?
 of distinction, as if it were to exclude all the
 rest of his disciples from any relation to him? And on the other hand, (not to introduce the
 name of my honoured and beloved brethren up-
 on this invidious occasion,) *was this Paul*, whom
 some of you so much extol, *crucified for you?*^e
Or were you baptized into the name of Paul,
 that you should thus affect to wear it as a mark

14 of distinction? Since there have been these un- 14 I thank God
 happy divisions in your society, and my name, that I baptized none
 among others, has been made use of to such a of you but Crispus
 purpose, *I thank God that it so happened in and Gaius:*
 the course of his providence that *I baptized*
none of you except Crispus, once the ruler of the

^d *I am for Christ.*] They might per-
 haps be displeased with Peter for his con-
 descension to the uncircumcised at An-
 tioch, (Gal. ii. 12.) which happened long
 before the date of this epistle; and might
 also, as L'Enfant intimates, have valued
 themselves on having heard Christ preach
 in his own person during the time of his
 ministration on earth.

^e *Was Paul crucified for you?*] As if
 he had said, Are your obligations to me
 equal or comparable to those you are
 under to our common Master, to him who
 died for us upon the cross? He men-
 tions *himself*, as it was least invidious to
 do it, though the application was equal-
 ly just as to every other instance. Com-
 pare chap. iii. 6.

15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name.

16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanus: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

17 For Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the gospel.

synagogue, and my worthy friend the hospitable *Gaius*: *Lest any should have a pretence to say, though ever so falsely, that I made the waters of baptism waters of strife; and had baptized into my own name,*^f or in a view of particular and personal attachment to myself, to the injury of my brethren or of the church in general. I remember that *I baptized also the family of Stephanus, the first-fruits of Achaia; and I know not whether I baptized any other.*^g And indeed it might very naturally happen that I should baptize only these few; *for Christ sent me not so much to baptize; which was an office that others of a much inferior rank in the ministry might as well perform; but to preach the gospel, and thereby to bring persons to that faith which would entitle them to this appropriate ordinance of Christianity. And I bless God with all my heart, that I have been enabled to do it with such simplicity, fidelity, and success.*

SECT.
II.
1 Cor.
i. 15,

IMPROVEMENT.

WHILE we live in the midst of so much darkness, and continue obnoxious to so many prejudices and errors, it will be absolutely impossible for us so to speak the same thing, and so perfectly to be joined in the same mind and judgment, as that there should be no diversity of opinion or expression. But let us labour to obey the apostle's pathetic exhortation, so far as the imperfection of this mortal state may admit. Let us be entreated in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that venerable,

Ver. 10.

^f *Lest any should say I baptized into my own name.*] If any should object that others might do it for him; it may be answered, that Paul's attendants (who seem to have been Timothy and Silas, Acts xviii. 5; 2 Cor. i. 19.) were persons of an established character, so as to be above such suspicion; that baptism was probably administered too openly to allow of this; and that the apostle herein does, as it were, appeal to the baptized persons themselves, challenging any one of them all to say that the ordinance was administered to him in Paul's name.

^g *I know not whether I have baptized any other.*] This expression of uncertainty as to such a fact, is by no means inconsistent with inspiration, in that view and notion of it which I have endeavoured to state and vindicate in my discourse on

that subject, annexed to the third volume of this work. I can by no means think with Bishop Burnet, that the reason why Paul baptized so few, was because baptism was delayed till some considerable time after conversion to Christianity, and that the apostle did not stay so long in a place as to do it; (Burnet on the Articles, Art. xxvii. p. 304, Edit. 1699,) for it does not appear to me that baptism in these earliest and purest ages was long delayed; and it is certain that this cause could not take place here, as Paul continued at Corinth 18 months. I rather think the office was generally assigned to inferiors, as requiring no extraordinary abilities, and as being attended with some trouble and inconvenience, especially where immersion was used, as I suppose it often, though not constantly, was.

SECT. that endeared, that sacred name, that there be no schism among
 II. us, no mutual hatred or animosity, no uncharitable contentions,
 — no severe censures of each other. And as we desire that there may not, let us take care that we do not impose upon our brethren indifferent things as necessary, and thereby drive them into a separation for conscience-sake, and tempt them at the same time, by our ill usage, to that bitterness of resentment which would make them what the mere separation would not, transgressors of this precept, and us partakers in their sins.

On the other hand, let none of us be disposed to dispute merely for the sake of disputing, nor unnecessarily oppose the judgment or taste of our brethren, out of an affectation of singularity, or a spirit of contention. But let us rather labour, so far as with a safe conscience we can, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. And while we do this, if our brethren will exact such submissions from us as they are not warranted by God to require, and as we cannot in conscience pay, let us follow conscience whithersoever it leads us, taking all necessary care that it be rightly guided; and if in that circumstance our brethren will cast us out and say, *Let the Lord be glorified*; and if to the rest of their unkindness they will add the farther injury of branding us with the odious names of schismatics or of heretics, let it be a light thing to us to be judged of man's judgment. Let us not render railing for railing, nor injury for injury, but rather, by our meekness, endeavour to overcome their severity; and wait for that happy time when more of the spirit of knowledge and of charity shall dispose them to throw down those middle walls of partition by which the temple of God is straitened and defaced, and the convenience, the symmetry, and grandeur of its original plan so lamentably spoiled. Above all, let us wait that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest, and that world where they who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity shall retain no remembrance of the controversies that once divided them, unless it be to balance the alienations of time with the endearments of eternity.

In the mean while, let us avoid as much as possible a party-
 ver. spirit, and not be fond of listing ourselves under the name of
 12, 13 this or that man, how wise, how good, how great soever. For surely if the names of Peter and Paul were in this view to be declined, much more are those which, in these latter days, have so unhappily crumbled the Christian and Protestant interest, and have given such sad occasion to our enemies to reproach us. Christ is not divided: nor were Luther or Calvin, or even Peter or Paul, crucified for us; nor were we baptized into any of their names.

Happy shall that disciple of our compassionate Lord be, whom he shall most eminently own in healing the breaches which the

artifices of the temper, too often abetted by the infirmities of SECT.
 Christ's faithful servants, have already made in the Church, and II.
 which the great enemy is continually endeavouring to multiply, —
 and to widen ! Happy he, who reverencing and loving his Master's
 image wherever he sees it, shall teach others to do so too ! And
 who, being himself an example of yielding, so far as he consci-
 entiously can, and of not taking upon him to censure others,
 where he cannot yield to them, shall do his part towards cement-
 ing, in the bonds of holy love, all the children of God, and the
 members of Christ ! How unsuccessful soever his efforts may be,
 amidst that angry and contentious, that ignorant and bigoted
 crowd, who miscale themselves Christians; or by whatever sus-
 picious and reproachful names his moderation may be stigma-
 tized; his Divine Master will neither fail to consider it in its
 true view, nor to honour it with proportionable tokens of his
 acceptance and favour. Love is the first and greatest of his
 commands; and after all the clamour that has been made about
 notions and forms, he who practises and teaches love best, shall
 be greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

SECT. III.

The Apostle, knowing that a fond regard to eloquence and philosophy, to which some of their teachers made high pretensions, was one great occasion of their divisions, sets himself to show how little stress was to be laid upon them; which he illustrates by the choice which God had made of gospel preachers quite destitute of those accomplishments, 1 Cor. i. 17, to the end.

1 COR. I. 17.

FOR Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

1 CORINTHIANS I. 17.

I JUST now told you that *Christ did not send me to baptize*, as my principal business, but SECT.
rather to preach the gospel;^a and now I must III.
 add, that in the commission which I had the ho-
 nour to receive from him, he did *not* instruct
 me to preach it *with* those philosophical niceties
 of expression, or laboured rhetoric, which
 many are so ready to esteem as the *wisdom of*
words; lest if I had attended to these little things,
 the cross of Christ should have been deprived of
 its just honours, and so have been enervated,

1 Cor.
i. 17.

^a *Baptize, but to preach.*] As I knew not how to avoid the repetition of this clause, without prolonging the former section beyond due bounds, or making

an improper division; I hope the reader will excuse it and a few other instances of this kind which will occur.

SECT. and rendered vain.^b For this must have been
 III. the natural consequence, when men saw one
 who pretended to know so much, and to have
 received such extraordinary discoveries of the
 gospel, and of Christ crucified as its great foundation, seeming not so much to trust to the grand important facts he averred, as to artificial reasonings, or ornaments of speech, in his manner of representing them to the world.

- 18 I might well be cautious on this head; *for the doctrine of the cross is indeed folly, with respect to the judgment of them that are perishing; to wretched creatures, who are in the way to be for ever undone. They, in that fatal madness, which leads them to speedy ruin, think it a ridiculous and mean thing, to expect salvation from one who seemed unable to save himself; and glory from one who expired in ignominy. But to us who are saved from the contagion of so wicked an age, and are in the way to everlasting salvation, it is a most illustrious display of the power of God, to the noblest purposes our minds can conceive. For it is written, and the words are remarkably applicable to this great event, (Isa. xxix. 14.) I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and abolish the sagacity of the prudent; thus hath God, by this dispensation, poured confusion on human wit and learning, eloquence and philosophy: So that, in allusion to other words of the same prophet, we may say,^c (Isa. xxxiii. 18,) Where [is] the celebrated*

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 Where is the

^b Should have been enervated and rendered vain.] If the doctrine of the crucifixion of the Son of God for the sins of men be indeed true, it is undoubtedly a truth of the highest importance, and it might reasonably be expected, that a person who had been instructed in it by such extraordinary methods, should appear to lay the main stress of his preaching upon it. The design of this wonderful dispensation might therefore have been in a great measure frustrated, if it had been the care of the first preachers of it, and particularly of Paul, to study a vain parade of words, and to set off their discourses with those glittering ornaments which the Grecian orators so often sought, and which the Corinthians were so ready to affect. But amidst all the beautiful

simplicity which a deep conviction of the gospel tended to produce, there was room left for the most manly and noble kind of eloquence; which therefore the Christian preacher should labour to make habitual to him, and of which this apostle himself is a most illustrious example.

^c In allusion to other words of the same prophet, we may say.] I think it would be a very unnecessary labour, to endeavour to prove that these words are an exact translation of the passage referred to; or to show that passage to be a prophecy of the success of the gospel. The context in Isa. xxxiii. refers to the deliverance of Judea from Sennacherib; and the 18th verse describes the Jews as reviewing and meditating on the terror into which they had been thrown;

wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

sage, whose wise counsel and penetrating genius have been held in greatest esteem? *Where the learned scribe? Where the ostentatious disputer of this world,*^d who hath been most admired for the subtilty of his reasoning, and accuracy of his distinctions? As God of old delivered his people, in spite of all the proud preparations and insolent boastings of the Assyrians, not by their own counsels or arms, but by his almighty power; so doth he now conduct his grand design for the immortal happiness of his chosen. Look upon the dispensation of the gospel as now administered, and say, *hath not God made the wisdom of this world* appear to be foolish and vain, when the highest results of it are compared with those great effects which he knows how to produce without it, and even in opposition to it all. *For it is indeed so: since in the wisdom*²¹ *of God*, in the midst of the most stupendous displays of the Divine wisdom with which they were always surrounded, *the world, by all the improvements of its boasted wisdom, knew not the living and true God, but ran into the wildest and most absurd sentiments that can be imagined concerning the Deity; (some of them absolutely denying it, and others representing it under the most monstrous notions and forms;)* when this I say was generally the case, *it pleased God, by that which they have impiously ridi-*

SECT.
III.

1 Cor.
i. 20.

²¹ For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God

and then crying out in a noble exultation over all the baffled schemes of the enemy: Where is the scribe that mustered the forces? Where the receiver, or paymaster, who distributed money or stores among them? Where the engineer, that counted the towers, to determine where the attack might most conveniently be made? In a bold and beautiful allusion to, and imitation of these words, though with very different ideas, the apostle proceeds, in the animated clause that follows, to triumph over the oppositions of human science in its various forms, when levelled against God's victorious gospel.

^d Sage scribe, disputer.] Notwithstanding all the learned pains which Dr Fuller, in his *Miscellanies*, (Lib. III. cap. 7.) or Godwin, in his *Hebrew Antiquities*, (Lib. II. cap. 6.) have taken to prove that these *three words* refer to *three orders* of learned men among the Jews—the na-

tural philosopher, and the literal, and the allegorical interpreter of scripture; I rather think the apostle meant to include persons most eminent for their learning and sagacity, whether among Jews or Gentiles. The sages of the latter, and the scribes of the former, are well known; and the disputer of the age may include such of both, as, proud of their natural sagacity, were fond of engaging in controversies, and fancied they could confute every adversary. If, as Mr. Locke supposes, the chief leader of the faction against St. Paul (whom that learned and ingenious writer styles the false apostle,) called himself a scribe, there will be a peculiar propriety in the use of the word here; but without that supposition, it might easily be understood by the Corinthians, who had so considerable a synagogue of Jews among them.

SECT. culed as *the most egregious folly of preaching*,
 III. by preaching, which is indeed destitute of all
 the wisdom of which they boast, *to save multi-*
 tudes; and those, not such as are the most art-
 ful cavillers, or the most sagacious reasoners,
 but *those that with honest simplicity and plain-*
 ness of heart, *believe what is credibly testified*
to them, and taught by a superior authority.

by the foolishness of
 preaching to save
 them that believe.

1 Cor.
 i. 21.

- 22 *For whereas the Jews demand a sign^e from*
 heaven to introduce a Messiah, who shall estab-
 lish a temporal kingdom, victorious over all
 their enemies; *and the Greeks seek a depth of*
wisdom and philosophy, or the ornaments of
 23 *eloquence and charms of address; We never-*
theless, conscious of our high commission, and
faithful to our important trust, without regard-
ing at all the unreasonable and petulant de-
mands of either, go on plainly to preach Christ
crucified; to the Jews indeed a stumbling-block,^f
being most directly contrary to all their secular
expectations; and foolishness in the abstract, to
the Greeks,^g who treat it as a low and idle tale,
 24 *hardly worth the least degree of notice: But to*
those who are by divine grace effectually called,
both Jews and Greeks, Christ, amidst all the
dishonours of his cross, is known and acknow-
ledged as the power of God and the wisdom of
God; to the converted Jews his mission is con-
firmed by miraculous evidence, and the accom-
plishment of prophecies, far more important

22 For the Jews
 require a sign, and
 the Greeks seek af-
 ter wisdom:

23 But we preach
 Christ crucified, un-
 to the Jews a stum-
 bling-block, and un-
 to the Greeks fool-
 ishness;

24 But unto them
 which are called,
 both Jews and
 Greeks, Christ the
 power of God, and
 the wisdom of God.

^e *The Jews demand a sign, &c.]* When
 we consider how many miracles were
 continually wrought by and upon the
 first preachers and converts of Christia-
 nity, this may seem an astonishing de-
 mand; but from a memorable passage
 in Josephus, in which he speaks of an
 impostor, promising his followers to
 show them a sign of their being set at
 liberty from the Roman yoke, compared
 with their requiring from Christ, amidst
 the full torrent of his miracles, *a sign*
from heaven; I am led to conclude, that
 the sense given in the paraphrase is the
 genuine interpretation of this much-con-
 troverted passage. See the paraphrase
 and note on Mat. xii. 38. Vol. I. p. 346;
 and Mat. xvi. 1, p. 477.

^f *To the Jews indeed a stumbling-block.]*
 It is well known, that nothing exposed
 Christianity more to the contempt of the
 Jews than the doctrine of the cross; they

therefore called Christ in derision תלוי,
 Tolvi, *the man that was hanged*, that is, on
 the cross; and Christians, עברי תלוי,
 Abde tolvi, *the disciples of the crucified*
malefactor; and by a *paranomasia*, or
 malignant playing on the word, they
 called ευαγγελιον, און גלון, Aven gelon, *a*
revelation of vanity. See Leigh's *Critica*
Sacra, in loc.

^g *To the Greeks foolishness.]* It is well
 known how profanely Lucian insults the
 Christians, on worshipping a *crucified im-*
postor; and many of the fathers speak of
 the same reproach. Archbishop Tillot-
 son appears to have given credit to the
 charge brought against the Jesuits, who,
 to avoid the like offence of the Chinese,
 denied that *Christ was crucified*, and re-
 presented it as an invention of the Jews
 to asperse Christianity. Tillotson's
 Works, Vol. II. p. 284.

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

than any event which their carnal brethren expect; and the believing Gentile finds it infinitely fuller of Divine wisdom and goodness to a lost world, than any system of philosophy that was ever invented. And well may they thus judge, *because what the world profanely censures as a folly most unworthy of God,^b is, and in its effects appears to be, incomparably wiser than all the projects which the wit of men can devise; and what it impiously insults, as the weakness of Christian teachers, which it charges them with falsely ascribing to God, being really his own work, will be found to be stronger than all the efforts which men can make, either to reform the world any other way, or to obstruct the prevalency and success of this: and this is the necessary consequence of its being indeed divine.*

SECT.
III.
1 Cor.
i. 24.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

And for the farther illustration of this thought, let me call you to *behold*, and seriously to *contemplate your calling*,ⁱ brethren; consider the state of your fellow-Christians in general, and even of those who are employed as ministers of the gospel, and you will perceive [*there are*] *not many wise according to the flesh*, according to those maxims which a sensual world governs itself by, in its principles of secular policy; there are *not many mighty* heroes renowned for their martial courage, there are *not many of noble birth* and illustrious rank among men, to be found on their list. *But God hath chosen* those that are reputed *the foolish things of the world*, that he may shame the wise men of whom it is most ready to boast; and the weak things of the world, who pretend to no extraordinary strength or valour, hath God chosen, that he may, by their heroic patience under the severest sufferings, *shame its mighty things*, which have never been able, with all their boasted fierceness, to equal that meek fortitude with

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

^b The folly of God, &c.] As it is absolutely impossible that there should be either *folly* or *weakness* in God, so it is certain that the world did not in general believe that there was; and consequently these strong phrases must be used in a very peculiar sense, and must mean that scheme which was really his,

though the world, for want of understanding it, represented it as *weakness* and *folly* unworthy of God.

ⁱ Your calling.] L'Enfant renders it, *those among you who are called*: which, with many other passages in this version, retains the sense, but departs from the exactness of St. Paul's expression.

SECT. which we trace the footsteps of the Lamb of

III. God: *And ignoble things of the world hath God*

1 Cor.
i. 23.

chosen, and things most commonly and scornfully set at nought^k among men; yea, and things which are not^l in the least regarded, but overlooked as if they had no being, and were below contempt itself, hath God chosen, that he may abolish and annihilate things that are in the highest esteem, and make the most illustrious figure

29 among the children of men: *That his great end of humbling us might be more effectually secured, and that no flesh might boast of any ad-*

30 vantages or distinctions in his presence. For on the whole, all we have that is worth mentioning, we receive from Christ; and we receive it from him as the gift of God, since it is of him, and his free mercy and grace, that ye are called to share in the blessings given by Christ Jesus his Son. He exhibits this blessed Saviour to us, and disposes our hearts to accept of him, who, amidst our ignorance and folly, is made of God unto us a source of wisdom; and through him, guilty as we are, we receive righteousness; polluted as we are, we obtain sanctification; and enslaved as we naturally are to the power of our lusts, and the dominion of Satan, we obtain

31 by him complete redemption.^m So that we may now indeed boast of our happy change, in whatever point of light it be considered; but it is a boast not of insolent presumption, but humble gratitude; as it is written, (Jer. ix. 23, 24; Isa. lxxv. 16,) “*He that boasteth let him boast in the Lord, and in this, that he knoweth me who exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness on the earth.*”

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are;

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

* *Things set at nought.*] Agreeable to this, the Danish missionaries tell us, that most of the Malabarian converts were the poorest of the people; the poets and wits, who valued themselves upon their genius, learning, and politeness, despising the gospel, and doing their utmost to oppose its progress. See Nieuchamp's excellent history of this important mission.

^l *Things which are not.*] Dr. Whitby

shows here, how well this represents the supreme contempt in which the Jews held the Gentiles. Compare Deut. xxxii. 21; Isa. xl. 17.

^m *Wisdom, righteousness, &c.*] Bos would render the words, for of him, (in Christ Jesus, who is made of God unto us wisdom,) ye are righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that is, completely justified, sanctified, and redeemed.

IMPROVEMENT.

MAY divine grace form the taste of ministers and their hear-
 ers more to this doctrine of Christ crucified! May he every
 where be preached, and that be accounted the truest wisdom of
 words by which his cross may become most efficacious. There
 cannot be surely a more evident demonstration of folly, or a
 more dreadful token of approaching ruin, than despising the
 wisdom of God and the power of God. If we are ever shaken
 by that contempt for the gospel which so many are continually
 ready in our age to express, let us recollect what glorious ef-
 fects it hath produced; whilst, in the midst of such illustrations
 of the wisdom of God, the world by all its wisdom knew not its
 Maker; how many believers have been saved, how many by
 believing are daily brought into the way of salvation? In this
 view let us triumphantly say, *Where is the wise, the scribe, the*
disputer of this world? what has wisdom, learning, disputation
 done in comparison of what the plain and simple doctrine of a
 crucified Saviour has wrought, and is continually working? Let
 us earnestly pray that God would, by the power of his grace,
 disperse the prejudices of men; that the Jews may not so de-
 mand a sign, as that Christ crucified should be a stumbling-
 block to them, nor the most learned of the Gentiles so seek af-
 ter science, as that the wisdom of God should seem foolishness
 to them; but that both may join in feeling and owning how
 divinely wise and how divinely powerful the dispensation of the
 gospel is.

Let us not be offended with our calling, though so few of the
 wise, the mighty, and the noble, partake of its benefits. If God
 hath chosen the weak things, they shall confound the mighty;
 and the foolish, they shall shame the wise. Never shall we find
 ourselves truly happy till we come to feel that we are naturally
 foolish and guilty, polluted and enslaved; and that our wisdom
 and righteousness, our sanctification and redemption, are in
 Christ, who is made unto us of God, all this, and indeed all in
 all. Then shall we know, and not till then, what true glory
 means, even when we can abase ourselves to the dust in his pre-
 sence, and have learned only to glory in the Lord.

SECT. IV.

The apostle farther illustrates the reasons for which he had declined all ostentation of eloquence when he came among the Corinthians; and particularly insists on the extraordinary nature of the facts and doctrines he was to teach, which were of a much higher original than any discoveries which human wit or learning could make, and were to be traced up to the immediate teachings of the Holy Spirit; their nature being so wonderful that it was difficult for the corrupted minds of men to receive them, even when they were taught. 1 Cor. ii. 1, to the end.

1 CORINTHIANS II. 1.

SECT.
IV.1 Cor.
ii. 1.

I HAVE observed that the design of God in the gospel is of a very humbling nature, admirably calculated to stain the pride of human glory, and bring men to boast in him alone. And with truth and pleasure I can say to you, my brethren, that in perfect harmony with this wise and excellent scheme, when I first came among you, I came not with the pomp of language^a or worldly wisdom, with the laboured charms of eloquence or philosophy: for I remembered that I was declaring to you no human invention, which needed or admitted such ornaments or recommendations, but was exhibiting the testimony of God to a plain fact, for which I produce authentic evidence by visible divine operations. I therefore endeavoured to exhibit it in as intelligible a way as I could, and treated it as one who believed that it really came from God, and so needed not the
2 varnishing of human art. For I was previously determined in my mind, that fond as I knew you were of refined speculation and polite address, I would appear to know,^b and employ myself to make known, nothing among you^c but Jesus as the Christ, the great promised Messiah of the Jews, even that crucified person^d against which so many scandals are

1 COR. II. 1.

AND I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

^a *The pomp of language.*] This certainly alludes to the vain affectation of sublimity and subtilty so common among the Greeks of that age, and very remote from the true eloquence in which (as was observed above) our apostle did so remarkably excel. L'Enfant thinks he refers to his not being perfectly master of the Greek language in all its purity and elegance, with which the Corinthians spoke it; but I prefer the former sense as more suitable to the original.

^b *Appear to know.*] In that sense the word γινωσκω is used by Pindar, (Olymp. xiii.) and it is most natural to give it that signification here.

^c *Among you.*] There seems a peculiar emphasis in this expression, as if the apostle had said, I did not change my usual method at Corinth, and you know with what glorious success it was attended.

^d *Even that crucified person:* καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρωμένον.] The Jews and heathens

3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling:

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God,

6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought.

probably gave Christ this name by way of contempt; but St. Paul declares that instead of concealing this as an infamy and scandal, it was the main thing he insisted upon; as indeed all the most important doctrines of the gospel stand in a close and natural connexion with it. And no doubt but he took them in that connexion; for he refers in the course of these epistles to several doctrines re-

raised. Yet did I resolve steadily to maintain the doctrine of his cross, and endeavour to exalt its honours wherever I came, not excepting your opulent and polite city. And to this plan you know I resolutely adhered, though *I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling*; for I know I had enemies about me on every side, (Acts xviii. 6, 9,) and laboured under natural disadvantages, (2 Cor. x. 10,) and the force of the prejudice which I had to encounter was strong. And you well know, 4 that *my speech in private, and my preaching in public, [was] not in the persuasive discourses of human wisdom,*^e eloquence, or philosophy, nor with that pomp and sophistry of argument which the learned men of the world are so ready to affect. But far from being contemptible on that account, it had other much nobler recommendations: for it was *in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power*, by the most convincing evidence, arising both from the prophecies of the Old Testament inspired by the Holy Ghost, and from the miraculous energy which he hath exerted in and by the apostles, and other ministers of the New. And on this I laid the 5 whole stress; *that your faith should not depend on the wisdom, reason, or address, of men, but on the power of God*, a much surer foundation, which shows how little reason you have to value yourselves on any appearance of the former.

Nevertheless, though we want what is commonly called human wisdom, yet *we speak the truest and most excellent wisdom among those who are perfect*, and, if I may so express it, completely initiated into these divine mysteries; such well-instructed and experienced souls will bear witness to its incomparable excellence. But we speak *not the wisdom of this world, nor of the rulers of this world*: nor that which is admired and sought by the great politicians of the age,

lating to the Father and the Holy Spirit as what he had taught them, though not expressly included in the doctrine of the crucifixion.

^e *Persuasive discourses of human wisdom.* This seems to be the just rendering of the expression *πειθαις ανθρωπινης σοφιας λογοις*, and so, I think, it is rendered by the celebrated Archbishop of Cambray.

SECT.
IV.
1 Cor.
ii. 3.

SECT. whether Jews or Gentiles, *who nevertheless shall*
 IV. soon be brought down and abolished, shall find
 I Cor. difficult and dreadful scenes arising, in which all
 ii. 6. their boasted sagacity and penetration will be

7 of no avail.^f But we, taught of God to despise the transient vanities which delude them, *speak* what must be infinitely more worthy your most attentive consideration and regard, for it is *the wisdom of God himself in a mystery*: that mysterious wisdom, *which was long hidden* and entirely unknown, and now appears to contain wonders which no understanding of man or angel can fully penetrate; even that wisdom *which God from eternal ages*^g pre-determined in the secret of his own all-comprehending mind, for the great purposes of our final salva-

8 tion and glory.^h A wisdom this, *which none of the Jewish rulers of this our age, or of the heathen that were concerned in it, knew*; for if they had indeed known [it,] they would not by any meansⁱ have presumed to have crucified one so greatly their superior as the Lord of glory; wicked as they were, they would for their own sakes have been afraid to attack the Son of God, his long-promised Messiah, had they been thoroughly apprised of his high character and dignity.

9 But [this is] as it is written,^k (Isa. lxiv. 4,)

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the rulers of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is writ-

^f [Politicians of the age, &c.] Mr. Locke insists upon it, as an observation of great importance, that *αἰών ὁ αὐτός* generally signifies *the Jewish economy*; and supposes that the apostle here also aims a silent stroke at the Jewish teacher that set himself up in opposition to him, and refers to the approaching destruction of the Jews by the Romans. And Mr. L'Enfant agrees with this, only explaining it of the learned rabbies of their synagogues. But as the Jewish magistrates, or scribes, were not the only princes in crucifying Christ, (compare Acts iv. 27.) and as the word *αἰών* has sometimes undoubtedly a more extensive signification, (compare Rom. xii. 2; Gal. i. 4; Eph. ii. 2; chap. vi. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 10; Tit. ii. 12; and even in this epistle, chap. iii. 18, and the next chapter, iv. 4.) and as St. Paul's observation here may so well be applied to Gentile as well as Jewish princes, I saw no reason for limiting the sense, which I never choose to do, without some apparent necessity. On the same principle, I have receded from Mr. Locke's interpretation of the next verse.

^g [From eternal ages.] To what I have just said of my reasons for not interpreting this of the time of setting up the Jewish economy, I must add, that it signifies little to endeavour to bring such expressions down to any period of time. If it be granted, that they intend any thing previous to the existence of those to whom they refer, the same difficulties will still lie in the way; nor is it possible to avoid them.

^h [Our final salvation and glory.] L'Enfant explains this of the *glory of the apostles*, in being appointed to publish this revelation; but the sense we have given equally suits the phrase, and is much more sublime and important.

ⁱ [Not by any means.] *οὐκ ἂν*, is an expression which seems to have this force. Compare Luke xxiii. 34.

^k [As it is written, &c.] The context in Isa. lxiv. may well be explained to express *the church's earnest desire of the manifestation of the glories of the Messiah's kingdom*; and I think it more probable that this is a quotation of those words, with some little variation, than that it

ten, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might

when the prophet, speaking of the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, says, *Eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, what glorious things God hath prepared for them that love him.* Nor had the generality of mankind, or even the people who enjoyed the benefit of the Jewish scripture, any just conception of the nature of this sublime plan, and the method by which it was to be accomplished. *But God hath revealed [them] to us*

Christians, and especially to us his apostles, *by the extraordinary inspiration of his Spirit*, who intimately and fully knows them: *for the Spirit searcheth and penetrates all things, even the deep things of God*, the profoundest mysteries of his counsels, and his gospel. (Compare Rom. xvi. 25; Eph. i. 9; chap. iii. 3, 5, 7.) And well may he be acquainted with all these things; *for who of mankind knoweth the things of a man*, the secret recesses of his mind, on many occasions, and in many circumstances, *unless it be the spirit of a man which is in him,*¹ which knows it by consciousness, to a degree of certainty which no observation or reasoning can produce in another; *so also no one knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God himself*, who is intimately conscious of all, and can conceal or discover whatever he pleases.

Now this is entirely to the present purpose; 12 for the Spirit, which we have received, is not that of the world, nor do we govern ourselves by those carnal views which engross and enslave so great a part of mankind; *but we have received, in large and liberal supplies, that Spirit which is from God*, and which is the noblest of his gifts to the children of men, by which their minds are both informed and regulated; *that so we might both notionally and experimentally*

refers to a passage said to have been found in an apocryphal book ascribed to Elijah, (which probably was a forgery of much later date than this time,) where these words are indeed extant, being perhaps transcribed from St. Paul.

¹ *The spirit of a man.*] I do not apprehend that the distinction between the *soul* and *spirit*, to which some refer these words, is of great importance in the in-

terpretation of them. They must signify the *perfect acquaintance* with all the Divine schemes and purposes which the *Holy Spirit* has, and which the apostle's argument directly proves that no creature can have: so that it seems a glorious proof of the deity of the Spirit, and has accordingly been urged as such, by all who have defended that important doctrine.

SECT.
IV.
1 Cor.
ii. 9.

SECT. know the things which are freely given us by

IV. God : Which we also make it our business to speak, and to communicate to others, not in

1 Cor. words dictated by human wisdom, to excite
ii. 13. men's curiosity, amuse their imaginations, or gain their applause; but in those dictated by the Holy Spirit;^m and consequently best adapted to convey such ideas as he would impart, and to impress the hearts and consciences of men with a reverent and deep sense of those holy mysteries; and this we do with all serious care and attention, explaining such spiritual and sublime things by spiritualⁿ [words,] suggested

14 by him as best adapted to them. But in the mean time, vain and foolish men find a great deal in our preaching to cavil at, and object against. And it is no wonder they do; for the animal man,^o who continues under the influence of his appetites and passions, and is a stranger to the noble exercises and principles of the Divine life, receiveth not, with any inward relish or sense, the things of the Spirit of God, which are too sublime and refined for his low, corrupted and degenerate taste: for in proportion to the degree in which they are full of Divine wisdom, they will appear foolishness to him; neither can he rightly know [them] whilst he continues in his present state, and under such unhappy prejudices as these: for they are spiritually discerned, and a man must have a spiritual taste, formed by the influences of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, before he will tho-

15 roughly enter into their excellence. But the spiritual man, whose heart, illuminated and sanctified by the Divine Spirit, is set on spiritual and noble objects, discerneth all things about him

know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he him-

^m Those dictated by the Holy Spirit.] This expression may certainly convince us of the great regard which we ought always to maintain to the words of scripture; and may especially teach ministers how attentively they should study its beauties, and how carefully they should be to make it the support of their discourses.

ⁿ Explaining spiritual things, &c.] This sense of *συγγιγινώσκεις* occurs, Gen. xl. 8; and Numb. xv. 34, in the Seventy.

^o The animal man.] Without examin-

ing all that the learned and judicious Dr. Owen hath said one way on this text, or Dr. Claget and Dr. Stebbing another, I have taken that which seems to me the due medium, and for the farther vindication of this exposition, must refer to Clifford, in the 2d volume of the *Phoenix*, p. 544, and to my third letter to the author of *Christianity not founded on Argument*, p. 39, 40, only reminding my reader, that this very word *ψυχικός* is rendered *sensual*, Jam. iii. 15; Jude, ver. 19.

self is judged of no man. rightly, while he himself is discerned by no man; SECT. IV. by none of those who are most forward and heady in their censures; but remains like a man endowed with sight, among those born blind, who are incapable of apprehending what is clear to him, and amidst their own darkness cannot participate of nor understand those beautiful ideas and pleasing sensations which light pours upon him. 1 Cor. ii. 15.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

And surely, if you consider matters aright, 16 you cannot much wonder at this: *For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath instructed him?*^p There must undoubtedly be in the Divine counsels many secret and hidden things, and a man must have a mind capacious as that of the blessed God himself, to take upon him to judge of his schemes, and arraign his conduct. *But we*, even I Paul, and my brother-apostles, *have the mind of Christ*,^q who is the incarnate wisdom of God himself; and therefore we are not to be called to the bar of those who arrogantly pretend, merely on the foot of human reason, to censure us, as some of your presumptuous teachers do, to their own shame, and the detriment of those that hearken to their suggestions.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET it be the resolution of every Christian, and especially the Ver. 9. determination of every minister, with St. Paul, to know nothing but Jesus Christ, even him that was crucified: to esteem this the most important of all knowledge, to cultivate it in their own minds, and endeavour to propagate it to others. With this 3 Divine science, shall those ministers of the gospel who know least of the excellency of speech and the enticing words of man's wisdom, do more important things for the reformation of the world, and the salvation of souls, than without it the greatest masters of language, or adepts in philosophy, will ever be able

^p *Who hath instructed him?*] Some good interpreters, and particularly Mr. Pyle and Dr. Guyse, explain this of the *spiritual man*; but it seems more agreeable to the construction and its connexion with what follows, by him to understand God.

^q *We have the mind of Christ.*] This part of the epistle is very artificially conducted. He is now aiming at the great point

of establishing his authority, which had been suspected, amongst them; yet he does not directly propose, but obliquely insinuate, arguments against such suspicions; arguments which might possess their minds before they were aware of what he intended to effect by them. This important remark will often present itself to the attentive reader of St. Paul's epistles.

SECT. to effect. Let the princes of this world boast of the knowledge
 IV. and refined policy which is so soon to perish, by which so many
 ——— of their subjects perish, and sometimes themselves before their
 Ver. 6. time. In how many instances does it leave them to imitate the
 destructive maxims of those, who under pretence of public good,
 8 but really under the instigation of the basest private passions;
 crucified Jesus, the adorable Saviour, the Lord of glory.

May God teach us more of that hidden wisdom which they
 who are truly initiated into real Christianity know, and which
 opens upon us views and hopes, beyond what eye hath seen, or
 9 ear heard, or it hath particularly and fully entered into the
 heart of man to conceive. There is no need we should distinctly
 conceive it. It is enough that we know in the general, it is what
 God hath prepared for them that love him; which consideration may
 surely teach us to trample under our feet that which he so often
 bestows on them who hate him, and are abhorred by him; on those
 with whom he is angry every day.

May that Spirit which searcheth all things, even the hidden
 12 things of God, give us more deeply and affectionately to know
 the things which are freely given us of God, and to adore that
 free grace from which we receive them! These things we learn
 13 with the highest advantage from the holy scriptures, where they
 are delivered in words which the Holy Ghost taught: in words,
 therefore, the most admirably adapted to express those spiritual
 and sublime ideas they were intended to communicate: In
 which words, consequently, we learn to speak of the things of
 God with the exactest propriety and the truest edification.

May we be enabled spiritually to discern them, with what-
 14 ever contempt they may be treated by natural, that is, by animal
 men; by those, who, though conceited of their rational powers,
 can relish little or nothing but what relates to this low
 15 and sensual life. Conscious of that inward discerning which
 discovers all things to us in their true light, even things of infinite
 importance, may we pity that undiscerning rashness of blind
 arrogance and pride, with which some who think themselves
 the wisest in proportion to the degree in which they are the
 most wretched of mankind, may treat us, and not only us,
 16 but that gospel which is our glory and our joy. We have the
 mind of Christ delivered to us by his holy apostles, who were
 intimately and miraculously instructed in it. Let us humbly
 receive the oracles they deliver; and whilst others are presuming
 haughtily to censure them, may we think ourselves happy, if,
 with meek subjection to their unerring authority, we may sit
 at the feet of such teachers, and regulate our lives by their
 instructions.

SECT. V.

The apostle reproves the carnality of the Corinthians, in contending about human teachers, and urges many important considerations to cure them of so unbecoming a temper. 1 Cor. iii. 1—9.

1 COR. III. 1.

AND I, brethren, could not speak unto you, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS III. 1.

I HAVE been speaking of that great plainness with which I addressed myself to you when I came to preach the gospel among you at Corinth; and I hope, my brethren, you will not despise me for it; for truly, as it became my character as an apostle of Christ, so it suited yours, as being under the power of prejudices, which so far prevailed, that even when you were converted to the profession of Christianity, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual persons, who had made any attainments in religion, proportionable to the illuminations and influences of the Spirit, which you had received: but was obliged in many instances to address you, as those who were still in too great a measure, carnal in your temper and views, and therefore were but as babes in Christ,^a and beginners in the Divine life. I might have said sublimer things, and in a more elevated manner; but found so much pride and faction among you, that it was necessary to insist much upon the plain and fundamental doctrines of the cross, rather than on things, which, if they might have suited your inclinations better, would have suited your circumstances less. I was forced² to preach to you, as to persons weak as infants; and so feed you with milk,^b which I did as it were pour into your mouths with a tenderness, like that of a mother, or a nurse, when feeding her sucking child; and could not conveniently feed you with strong meat. I waved discoursing

SECT,
V.

1 Cor.
iii. 1.

² I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hi-

^a Babes in Christ.] By explaining this of beginners in the Divine life, or such as had made but little proficiency in it, we reconcile this with those passages which speak of the eminency of their gifts. 1 Cor. i. 5; 2 Cor. viii. 7.

^b Feed you with milk.] The word τροφή exactly signifies, I give you to drink;

but as that rendering would not suit the other word with which it is connected, strong meat, I thought it best to retain our version. Parallel instances to this manner of expression are produced by Mr. Blackwall, in his Sacred Classics, Vol. I. p. 72.

SECT. on some of those doctrines which left room for
 v. the curiosities of sublimer speculation, and admitted of the greatest ornaments of discourse,^c
 1 Cor. because ye were not then able [to bear it,] nor
 iii. 2. indeed are ye yet able; as I perceive by the account which our brethren give of your present
 3 state. For it evidently appears, by what I hinted above, that ye are yet carnal, still under the influence of weak, and indeed sinful prejudices. I appeal to your own consciences on this occasion for the proof of this: while [there is] emulation, and contention, and factions among you, are you not indeed carnal? and do ye not walk and conduct yourselves, as unregenerate men do? So that by this behaviour, a stranger would not know that you were Christians, or see any thing in you above uninstructed and unsanctified nature. For when you eagerly contend about the honours of this or that teacher, and set him up as the head of a distinguishing party; so that one says, I am for Paul, and another, I am for Apollos,^d I admire the sublime sentiments of the one, and the fine language and address of the other; are ye not carnal? and do ye not talk in the spirit of your heathen neighbours, who have their favourite philosophers and orators too? And is this language for Christians? Who then is Paul? and who [is] Apollos? For what reason do ye regard either the one or the other? Is it for no consideration but that of talents, which they have in common with many who are strangers to the gospel? Or ought it not rather to be in a different view? even because they are the ministers of Christ, by whose means you have been instructed in his

thereto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

3 For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed,

^c Ornaments of discourse.] If any think that the use of them might have been a proper condescension to their weakness, it is to be remembered that the emulation of eloquence so ready to prevail among them, might have rendered such an indulgence dangerous.

^d I for Apollos.] Mr. Locke fancies (comparing chap. iv. 6,) that by Apollos, Paul means that Jewish teacher who was set up in opposition to him, and came among them, after he had preached the gospel to them; but it seems much more

probable to me, especially from the text just referred to, that he chose this name, that he might give no offence, and to show that he should lament and condemn any division among them, though it were in favour of himself, or the dearest friend he had in the world. I cannot think St. Paul would have described the false apostle, if there were any one person who might be so called, as watering his plantation, which he rather wasted; or have spoken of himself, and that messenger of Satan, as one; as he does verse 8.

even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7 So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together with

religion, and under whose teachings ye have believed and embraced it; and because they have humbly attempted to do their part for this great purpose, *even as the Lord gave to every man* both furniture and success. *I have planted* a Christian church among you; *Apollos* has since watered it by his affecting and useful addresses, (Acts xviii. 27,) but it was *God* who gave the increase, and caused the plantation thus watered to grow: no labourer can make his seed spring up without the influence of heaven, sunshine, and rain. When you come, therefore, to compare our part with that of God, it appeareth even as nothing in the comparison. We freely own, that how highly soever you may think of us, *he that planteth is nothing at all, and he that watereth; but God, who by his efficacious Spirit and grace giveth the increase, is all in all.*

But as for this opposition which you make between us, and this zeal with which you contend for one against another, it is altogether unreasonable and absurd: for *he that planteth and he that watereth are one;*^e we are united in interest, and united in design and affection; so that instead of being pleased, we are rather displeased and grieved with these invidious comparisons in favour of either. Our great concern is to please our great Lord, to whom we are shortly to give up our account, and from whom *we shall receive every one his own proper reward according to his own labour,* and not according to the prejudices of our fellow-servants either for or against us. *For we are not lords and proprietors of the church, nor persons that have independent schemes of our own to carry on; but we are the fellow-labourers of God,*^f the

SECT.
V.
1 Cor.
iii. 5.

^e *Are one.*] This is (as Mr. Cradock well observes in his Apost. Hist. p. 156.) another cogent argument against divisions: that, though their labours were different and their rewards proportionable, yet they had in the general *one office*, and were employed as *workers together by God* to plant the seeds of grace and holiness in the souls of men, and to bring them on to perfection. He here introduces an excellent discourse of the happy consequences of the faithfulness

in the ministerial work, and the awful account of it to be given up to God: A subject familiar to his own mind, and so proper for their teachers, that if it render the epistle something less regular, it balances the account by rendering it much more useful.

^f *The fellow-labourers of God.*] This is the exact import of *συνεργοὶ Θεοῦ*, which our version renders *labourers together with God*: an improper rendering on every account.

SECT. great Master of the family. *Ye are the hus-* God: ye are God's
 v. *bandry of God*, which we are to cultivate, that husbandry, ye are
 ——— ye may bring forth fruit for him. [*Ye are*] God's building.
 1 Cor. *the building of God*, which we are to endea-
 iii. 9. vour to advance, that he may dwell in you
 as in his holy temple, and glorify his name
 among you.

IMPROVEMENT.

- Ver. 1. WHO that wishes the welfare of the church of Christ, must not lament those sad remainders of carnality which are often to be found among them who have the greatest advantage for becoming spiritual; while the same contentious principles, fermented, no doubt, by the same malignant enemy of the whole body, breathe in so many of its members, and diffuse a kind of
 3 poison which at once swells and torments it! What envyings, and strife, and factions among those who ought to join as brethren, and to know but one interest! What a desire, in many instances, to increase the burdens of each other, instead of bearing them with friendly sympathy!
- 4 May Christians be cured of this dishonourable and fatal attachment to distinguished parties and human names! May ministers feel more of that generous and noble spirit which this great apostle expresses! His reasoning hath the same force still. Ministers are still intended to be only the instruments of producing and establishing faith in their hearers, and still depend
 5, 6, 7 as entirely as ever upon the blessing of God to give the increase to their labours. To that may they daily look, and be sensible that they are nothing without it, and that with it their part is so small that they hardly deserve to be mentioned. May their hands and hearts be more united; and retaining a due sense of
 9 the honour which God doth them in employing them in his vineyard and in his building, may they faithfully labour, not as for themselves, but for the great Proprietor, and till the day
 8 come when he will remember them in full proportion to their fidelity and diligence.

SECT. VI.

As a useful lesson both to teachers and private Christians in the present state of the Corinthian church, the apostle reminds them of that great trial which every man's work was to undergo, the great guilt of defiling God's temple, the vanity of human wisdom in the sight of God, and the great happiness of the true believer in that universal grant which God had made him of every thing necessary to his welfare. 1 Cor. iii. 10, to the end.

1 Cor. iii. 10.

ACCORDING to the grace of God which is given unto me as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

1 CORINTHIANS III. 10.

I HAVE spoken of you as God's building; and in that view have the pleasure to say, that in my first preaching amongst you, when you were entire strangers to the first principles of the gospel, according to the measure of the grace of God given to me; to which I desire to refer the honour of all that I am and of all that I do in this excellent work; I have been enabled to act in the character of a skilful architect or master-builder: for with all due care and application have I laid the great foundation, which hath strength sufficient to bear all the stress even of our eternal hopes. And one and another, whom God calls to labour among you, buildeth thereon, for the farther edification of your church, and of the souls of its particular members: but let every one carefully see to it, how he buildeth thereon, and what superstructure he raises. This is all indeed that remains to be done: for 11 other solid foundation no one is able to lay beside what is already laid, which is Jesus Christ,^a the great foundation-stone which God hath laid in Zion, elect and precious; and I take it for granted, no one who calls himself a Christian will attempt to lay any other. If any man build, 12 I say, upon this foundation, let him look to the materials and nature of his work; whether he raise a stately and magnificent temple upon it, adorned, as it were, like the house of God at Jerusalem, with gold and silver, [and] large, beautiful, and costly stones; [or] a mean hovel, consisting of nothing better than planks of wood roughly put together, and thatched with hay [and] stubble; that is, let him look to it, whether he teach the substantial vital truths which do

SECT.
VI.

1 Cor.
iii. 10.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble :

^a Which is Jesus Christ.] L'Enfant would render it, even this, that Jesus is the Christ; but I think the sense given in our text much nobler.

SECT. indeed belong to Christianity, and which it

VI. was intended to support and illustrate; or set

1 Cor.

iii. 12.

himself to propagate vain subtleties and conceits on the one hand, or legal rites and Jewish traditions on the other; which, though they do not absolutely destroy the foundation, disgrace it, as a mean edifice would do a grand and expensive foundation, laid with great pomp and

13 solemnity. But to prevent this, let me seriously admonish you, that whatever any man's work may be, and however it may be covered, and, as it were, hid behind the scaffolding, *every one's work shall ere long be made manifest. For the great day which is approaching shall lay it open, because it shall then be, as it were, discovered by fire; yea, the fire of that great day of general conflagration, when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, shall prove every man's work*

14 *of what kind it is.*^b It shall stand a severe examination, which will as soon expose the vanity of many things which some admired preachers value themselves upon, and for which they are extolled by their hearers, as the flame of some mighty burning shows the difference between the stability of a straw roof and a marble wall. And then *if any man's superstructure abide the test, and be approved, he will not only have the comfort of it in his own mind, which is an immediate and permanent satisfaction, but he shall also receive a glorious reward from Christ, the great Head of the church, and proprietor of the building, in comparison of which the applauses of men, or any thing they can bestow, deserve not to be mentioned by the name of a*

15 *reward. But if any man's work be then burnt up; if on that trial it be found like the combustible and mean materials which I represented by the wood, the hay, and the stubble; the consequence is, that he will sustain a proportionable loss.*^c He will find he has been spending

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest. For the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss;

^b *The day shall prove every man's work.*] It is so very unnatural with Dr. Whitby to interpret this of the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, or of any approaching persecutions of the Christian church, that one cannot but wonder that critics of character have adopted such a sense,

^c *Sustain a proportionable loss.*] I cannot but fear that an application to such niceties of unprofitable learning as those in which some who have the charge of souls spend almost the whole of their time, to the neglect of the vitals of Christianity, will be found in this day lost labour. Though such as employ

but he himself shall be saved; yet so, as by fire.

his time and strength to little purpose, and has lost a great deal of that reward which he might, through Divine grace, have secured, had he applied himself with vigour and zeal to the proper labours of a gospel-minister. Yet, if he be upon the whole a good man, who hath built upon Christ as the foundation, and, on the terms of the gospel, committed his soul to him, *he shall himself be saved*, and find mercy of the Lord; though in comparison with that more abundant entrance into his kingdom which others will have, it may be said, that he is saved with extreme difficulty, and as a man whose house is in flames while he is in it, and who is therefore forced with great terror to escape *through the fire*,^d sustaining the loss of every thing but his life.

SECT.
VI.
1 Cor.
iii. 15.

16 Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

Again, before I dismiss this topic of your 16 being the building of God, let me lead you into some farther reflections, and ask you seriously, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?*^e that the whole body of Christian converts is dedicated to his peculiar service, and honoured by his most gracious presence, as *the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*, and you thereby appear to be

themselves chiefly to inculcate in their preaching, doctrines, ceremonies, or forms of human invention, come nearer the case immediately referred to here.—L'Enfant refers this loss to the reproach and shame which such shall suffer before the tribunal of Christ.

^d *Through the fire.*] To be as a brand plucked out of the burning, is well known, as a proverbial expression, to signify a narrow escape from extreme danger. Compare Zec. iii. 2; Amos iv. 11; and especially Isa. xxxiii. 11, 12; to which some have thought the apostle here alludes. *Δια πυρὸς*, (Jude, 23,) is put for passing through the fire, as *δι' ὕδατος*, (1 Pet. iii. 20,) signifies to be saved from the water, by passing through it, as the ark did. The learned Elsner, who urges and illustrates these instances, shows, that the most approved heathen writers use the phrase in this sense. (Observ. Vol. II. p. 78.) Many divines have well shown how far this text is from giving any support to a popish purgatory. And though Mr. Fleming follows many of the ancient fathers, in explaining it of some terror or pain which Christians of very imperfect character may be exposed to, when they rise (as he supposes they will,) amidst

the flames of the last conflagration, (Flem. First Resur. p. 44,) the text will admit so fair a sense on the interpretation here given, that I cannot persuade myself from hence, without farther evidence, that numbers of holy souls, who have long been glorified in heaven, will be re-united to their bodies, which are to be raised in glory, to be in the first moments of that union terrified and tormented; though it should be but for ever so short a time. That the Pagans, as well as some of the Fathers, had a notion of some such purgatory, Elsner has shown in the passage cited above.

^e *You are the temple of God.*] Elsner hath many passages here, from Philo, Plato, and other writers, in which they represent a virtuous mind as the temple of God, and in which heathens speak in the highest and strongest terms of the obligations men are under to keep his temples inviolate and unpolluted. And if, as Mr. Locke supposes, Paul's chief opposer was a Jew, the vast veneration he would of course have for the temple at Jerusalem, would add great weight to this argument with respect to him and his followers.

SECT. consecrated to himself? Now *if any one* defile
 VI. or *destroy the temple of God*, it may well be
 apprehended, that *God*, ever jealous of his own
 1 Cor. honour, *will destroy him*. And you may as-
 jii. 17. sure yourselves from this view, that whatever
 preaching, or whatever conduct, tends to dimi-
 nish its purity and glory, will be very severely
 resented by him; even much more than the vio-
 lation of the place, (great as that impiety and
 provocation was,) where he so long caused his
 name to dwell upon Mount Zion. *For the tem-
 ple of God*, considered as such, is undoubtedly
holy, and awful. Much more then must that
 be so, which he hath erected by his grace in the
 breasts of intelligent creatures, and sanctified to
 himself, as the everlasting residence of his
 peculiar complacency. (Compare Isa. lvii. 15;
 chap. lxvi. 1, 2.) Now ye are this [temple;] each
 of you, if a true Christian, is such a sacred
 shrine, and the whole Christian church the com-
 plete and magnificent building. It therefore
 becomes every member of it to be very careful
 how he behaves, and what he teaches among
 you, lest he should commit an evil, of the enor-
 mity of which he may not be immediately aware.

- 18 I know there are those among you whose
 pride and self-conceit may lead them to despise
 this admonition, especially as coming from me;
 but *let no man deceive himself* with vain specu-
 lations of his own worth and abilities. *If any
 one of you seem to be wise in this world*, if he
 value himself upon what is commonly called
 wisdom among Jews or Gentiles, *let him become
 a fool, that he may be wise* indeed. Let him
 humbly acknowledge his own natural ignorance
 and folly, and embrace that gospel which the
 wisdom of the world proudly and vainly derides
 as foolishness, if he desire to approve himself
 really and substantially wise, and to reap at last
 the honours and rewards of those who are truly
 19 so in the sight of God. *For all the boasted
 wisdom of this world is foolishness with God*, who
 with one glance sees through all its vanity; *as
 it is written*, (Job v. 13,) *He entangleth the wise
 in their own crafty artifice*, often ruining them
 by those designs which they had formed with
 the utmost efforts of human policy, and were
 20 most intent upon executing. And again, it

17 If any man de-
 file the temple of
 God, him shall God
 destroy; for the tem-
 ple of God is holy,
 which temple ye are,

18 Let no man
 deceive himself. If
 any man among you
 seemeth to be wise
 in this world, let him
 become a fool, that
 he may be wise.

19 For the wisdom
 of this world is fool-
 ishness with God.
 For it is written, He
 taketh the wise in
 their own craftiness.

20 And again,

The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

is said elsewhere, (Psal. xciv. 11.) *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.* He sees how they ensnare themselves in their own subtleties, and when they think themselves most sagacious, are only amused with their own sophistry and deceit.

SECT.
VI.
1 Cor.
iii. 20.

21 Therefore let no man glory in men: for all things are yours:

Therefore, upon the whole, (that I may re- 21
turn to the point from whence I set out,) considering all I have said, and especially considering in what view the great God regards these things which we are so ready to value ourselves upon; *let none glory in men*, or divide themselves into parties, out of attachment to this or that teacher. *For all things are your's*, and we, in particular, are to be regarded, not as your lords and commanders, that you should list under our banners; but rather as your servants.

22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come: all are yours:

I except not myself, or the most honoured 22
among my brethren; *whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas*, be in question, we are all equally your's, to serve you to the utmost of our abilities, in the advancement of your best interests. Yea, I may go farther, and say, *whether* we speak of *the world*, God will give you so much of it as shall be for your real good; and indeed he supports its whole frame in a great measure for your sakes; *or if we survey life*, in all its various conditions, *or death*, and all its solemn harbingers and attendants, God will make the one, *or the other*, in different views advantageous to you, and will adjust the circumstances of both with the kindest regard to your happiness. *Things present, or future*, the comforts and privileges of this life on the one hand, or its afflictions and troubles on the other, and at length, the boundless felicity of the eternal state, where affliction and trouble shall be no more known; *all are*, through the Divine grace, *your's*. Remember this, and let the thought raise your minds above these little things which now occasion such contention between you; and be united in love, as God hath united you in privileges and hopes. *And bear in mind* 23
too, as the counterpart of this happy detail, that *ye are Christ's*; his property, his subjects, his people; and let that engage you to

23 And ye are

SECT. attend to his royal law of charity,^f by which Christ's; and Christ
 VI. you may be peculiarly known to be his. *And* is God's.
 as *Christ [is] God's*, and refers all his services
 1 Cor. as a Mediator, to his Father's glory, it will most
 iii. 23. effectually promote that great end of his appearance, that you should learn such a subjection of soul to him, and imbibe those candid and generous sentiments which I am labouring to produce and cherish in your minds.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. WITH what delight may the Christian survey this grand inventory, and, conscious that he is Christ's, call all things his own! With what pleasure survey the various gifts and graces of ministers, and consider them as given by God for his edification! With what complacency look round on things present, and forward on things to come, in this connexion, and call the world his own; and count not only life, but death, amongst his treasures! Both in their different aspects, are subservient to the happy purpose of glorifying God: and surely, when by death we may do it more effectually, death should be more welcome than life. And welcome it must indeed be to every believer, as the appointed means of transmitting him to the sight and enjoyment of God, and the possession of better blessings, than Paul, or Apollos, could ever describe, or any thing present, or any thing to come in this world, could ever afford.

Let these sublime views elevate the Christian above those occasions of contention, which, for want of ascending to such noble contemplations, are often the source of innumerable evils. And let us add to them that other consideration, that we are the
 16, 17 temples of the Holy Ghost; if Christians indeed, we are inhabited by God, even by his Spirit. Let this engage us to take the strictest care, neither to defile ourselves, nor to injure our brethren; lest in either view, it should be resented and punished by the holy God, as a sacrilegious profanation.

19 Let us not overvalue the wisdom of this world, since it is little regarded by God; nor be greatly concerned, if fools account our wisdom folly, and our life, madness. So censured they the prophets and apostles, before us; nor did our Master himself escape the calumny and outrage. We shall be happy enough,

^f Royal law of charity.] Nothing could have a greater efficacy to put an end to the contention so prevalent among the Christians at Corinth, than the consideration of those high privileges and hopes which were common to them all, as it would tend to sweeten their spirits, and inspire them with honourable and affectionate sentiments with respect to their brethren.

if we approve our fidelity to him, and if we build a wise super-structure on Christ, as the great, the only Foundation. SECT. VI.

Let his ministers especially be solicitous that they may not lose the labour of their lives, by choosing unhappily to employ them in that which will turn to no account in the great day of his appearing. Let them carefully examine their materials. Surely if they have senses spiritually exercised, it cannot be hard to distinguish between the substantial and undoubted doctrines of Christianity, which are as gold, and silver, and precious stones, and those fictitious, or at best, dubious and intricate points, which, in comparison with the former, are but wood, and hay, and stubble. And if, in urging these, they passionately inveigh against their brethren, and endeavour to bring them into contempt or suspicion, what do they but cement these combustible materials with sulphur? 10, 11 Ver. 12—15

O! let the frequent views of that last searching fire, that grand period of all, be much in our thoughts; that day, when not only the works of ministers, but every private person, must, as it were, pass through the flames. May we then be saved, not with difficulty, but with praise and honour! May our works, of what kind soever they are, abide, so as to be found worthy of applause, and through divine grace receive a distinguished reward!

SECT. VII.

To lay in a farther remedy against the pride and faction so ready to prevail among the Corinthians, the apostle leads them into several useful reflections on the nature of the ministerial office, the final judgment of him who searcheth all hearts, and the obligations they were under to the Divine goodness for every advantage by which they were distinguished from others. 1 Cor. iv. 1—7.

1 COR. IV. 1.

1 CORINTHIANS IV. 1.

LET a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards

I HAVE told you how rich and happy you are in the Divine donation, in consequence of which all things are yours; and particularly, Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas, with their various gifts and endowments. Learn, therefore, to form your estimate of us aright; and let a man so account of us, not as the masters of the church, but as the servants of Christ, who are in obedience to his commands, to wait on his family; esteeming it honour and happiness enough, if we approve ourselves as stewards of SECT. VII. 1 Cor. iv. 1.

SECT. *the mysteries of God*; as persons whose business of the mysteries of
 VII. it is, with the sincerest regard to his glory, to God.
 1 Cor. dispense that gospel which contains such su-
 iv. 1. blime truths, for so many ages concealed from
 2 the knowledge of the world. And *as for what* 2 Moreover, it is
remains to be done in the discharge of this required in stewards,
office, I hope we shall always remember, that that a man be found
it is demanded in stewards, that a man be found faithful.
faithful; since they also, as well as lower ser-
 vants in the family, are subject to account.
 And accordingly, it is my highest ambition that
 my great Master may judge me faithful, whe-
 3 with my conduct. And if my fidelity to my Lord may offend them, which is a very sup-
 posable case, I am well contented to abide all
 its consequences. For I will freely declare, in
 this view, *it is with me the smallest thing that*
can be imagined, that I should be judged by you,
dear as you are to me, or by any man's judg-
ment; his day will so soon be over, his censures
 can effect so little, that amidst the great pros-
 pects I have before me, it seems scarce to de-
 4 serve a mention. Nor indeed do I so judge
myself, as if my case were finally to be deter-
 mined by my own apprehensions concerning it.
 For though I bless God, *I am not conscious to*
myself of any thing criminal, of any designed
 neglect of my office, or unfaithfulness in my
 trust, *yet am I not hereby justified*:^a that is not
 the main thing in question; I know partiality
 to ourselves may often lead us to overlook many
 faults, for which God may another day condemn
 us. But he that judgeth me, the Person by whose
 judgment I am to stand or fall, *is the Lord Jesus*
Christ, who searcheth the hearts and trieth
 5 *the reins of the children of men.* Therefore be
 strictly careful that ye judge nothing before the
 appointed time, that is, until he, the great Lord
 of all, shall come, who shall pluck off the mask of
 every artful hypocrite, how high soever he may
 bear himself in the Christian church; shall bring

3 But with me it is
 a very small thing
 that I should be
 judged of you, or
 of man's judgment;
 yea, I judge not
 mine own self.

4 For I know no-
 thing by myself, yet
 am I not hereby jus-
 tified: but he that
 judgeth me is the
 Lord.

5 Therefore judge
 nothing before the
 time, until the Lord
 come, who both will
 bring to light the

^a Yet am I not hereby justified.] This
 seems a gentle, but a very affecting in-
 sinuation, that his opponents, confident
 as they might seem in their own integrity

and safety, would do well to take great-
 er heed that they were not imposed
 upon by the deceitfulness of their own
 hearts.

hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself, and to Apollos, for your sakes: that ye might learn in us not to think of men, above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

to light the hidden things of darkness,^b and shall manifest all the secret counsels of the hearts.^c And then shall every one have in the most public manner that praise from God before the assembled world, which is proportionable to his real character and conduct.

These things, brethren, I have by a very obvious figure transferred to myself, and [to] Apollos;^d mentioning our names, and that of Cephas only, instead of many more, since you know the entire friendship there is among us, and how far the names of most about whom you contend are inferior to these. And I have done this not on our own account, as you may easily apprehend, but *for your sakes, that you may learn, in attending to what has been said concerning us, distinguished as we are by our office, furniture, and success, not to entertain too high an opinion of yourselves, or others whom you are most ready to admire, above what is here written,*^e and appears reasonable on the principles which have been laid down: *that you may not be puffed up for one teacher, and against another, which surely you cannot allow with respect to other teachers, when you see us renouncing all such attachment to ourselves.* And indeed this would be very unreasonable, if the distinctions were as great as

SECT. VII.
1 Cor. iv. 5.

7 For who maketh

^b *Bring to light the hidden things of darkness.*] This is a lively and just insinuation that under specious forms his enemies concealed very dark designs, which would not bear the discoveries of that awful day.

^c *Manifest all the secret counsels of the hearts.*] This passage also suggests a very solid argument against magnifying one minister above another, namely, that the secret principles of men's actions are unknown; and it is enlarged upon to very good practical purposes; while the apostle at the same time takes an opportunity of making a very solemn profession of his own faithfulness, and showing the boldness he had towards God, and his modesty and candour to men; all which were extremely suitable to the general purposes he had in view.

^d *Transferred to myself, &c.*] Some, and particularly Mr. Locke, have inferred from hence that not St. Paul and Apollos, but some other persons, were set up

among the Corinthians for heads of parties, for whose name the apostle substituted his own and that of his most intimate friend; but the learned and judicious Witsius well observes, (Meletem, p. 104,) that it is probable their names were used among some others omitted, and the figure was only this, that the names of St. Paul and Apollos were used to signify themselves and any others so extolled; and when the apostle would say how little ministers were in themselves, he chose out of humility and prudence rather to take such freedom with himself and his most particular and intimate friend than with others.

^e *What is here written.*] Elsner (Observ. Vol. II. p. 85,) confirms this interpretation, and produces many instances in which *ὑπερβολῶς* is used to express *having too high an opinion of one's self*. L'Enfant explains it in something of a different sense, "*above what scripture warrants.*"

SECT. you, or they who have the highest conceit of thee to differ from
 VII. themselves, can imagine. For allowing all that another? and what
 self-love and prepossession can wish, let me ask hast thou that thou
 1 Cor. the man who carries it to the greatest height, didst not receive?
 iv. 5. Who maketh thee to differ [from another,] now if thou didst
 in any furniture or attainment, whether intellectual or moral? receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou
 And what hast thou of any kind hadst not received
 which thou didst not receive from God, the great it?
 Parent of universal good? But if thou hast received [it] all from him, why dost thou boast in
 the gift of his liberal goodness, as if thou hadst not received [it] from him, but it were originally and essentially thine own? Would you all
 but seriously reflect upon this, it would teach you humbler sentiments, much more rational
 in themselves, and on the whole, much more for your credit as well as comfort.

IMPROVEMENT.

NOTHING can be more conducive to the advantage of Christianity, and by consequence, of the world, whose happiness is so much concerned in its support and success, than that its preachers should consider and their hearers remember the nature of their office. They are not lords over God's household and heritage, but ministers of Christ, whose business it is to promote their Master's honour; stewards of his mysteries, who are to endeavour both to keep and to dispense them with all good fidelity. From their Master therefore may they take all their instructions, and to him let them refer all their administrations. Various judgments will be passed upon them; and they who will oppose the attempts of some of their brethren to introduce corruption and confusion into his family, will have many an unkind reflection thrown upon them, and experience the severity of censure for a conduct which merits the justest approbation. But

[Whether intellectual or moral.] I include moral attainments, because the apostle had in the preceding verses been speaking of fidelity in the ministry, and he elsewhere in this epistle speaks of obtaining mercy to be faithful, (chap. vii. 25.) and would be understood as referring not only to his giving us our faculties, but exciting us to the right use of them, both by external calls and advantages, and by inward impressions of his grace on the heart; though still in a manner suited to our free and rational natures, and which, however some may be distin-

guished by them, leaves all who choose wrong without excuse, and admits the exercise of justice as well as grace in the final distributions of good and evil. See the paraphrase on chap. iii. 7, which seems very applicable to this clause. Yet as it is certain the Corinthians chiefly gloried in their gifts, and in those of their favourite teachers, I doubt not but it is to these that the apostle chiefly refers in this place, and cannot think that the stress of the controversy relating to the sanctifying influences of divine grace does by any means rest on this passage.

let them learn by this excellent apostle, to be above the judgment of men, and to keep the judgment of the Lord in view ; that they may not only be supported under that petulance of their fellow-servants, but may learn to guard against what is much more dangerous, the treachery of their own hearts, and the flattery of self-love ; lest they fondly mistake the voice of prejudice for that of conscience, or in other words, the voice of an erroneous conscience, for that of a conscience well informed.

Let us often recollect the narrow limits of our own knowledge, that we may learn modesty in our censures of each other. He only can judge who knoweth the heart ; and there is a day approaching, which will manifest all its secrets. While others, with a pitiable mixture of arrogance and ignorance, judge one another, and judge us, let us rather be concerned that we may secure that praise of God, which will be heard and felt by the soul, with the highest rapture, and will silence every echo of human applause or censure.

To conclude: if it hath pleased God, in any respect, to distinguish us from others, by the gifts or graces which he hath bestowed upon us, let us humbly trace these distinctions to their true source : and instead of indulging the least degree of pride on their account, let us rather be the more humble. For surely the more we receive from God, the more we are indebted and obliged ; and the more we are obliged to the Divine goodness, the greater ought our shame and confusion to be, that we have not answered those obligations by more faithful care and more constant gratitude.

SECT. VIII.

The Apostle, in order to gain farther upon their affections, represents the many hardships and dangers to which he and his brethren were exposed, in comparison of that easy state in which the Corinthians were ; and reminding them at the same time of their particular obligations to him, he warns them not to force him on severities, to the use of which he was very averse. 1 Cor. iv. 8, to the end.

1 COR. IV. 8.

1 CORINTHIANS IV. 8.

NOW ye are full,

I HAVE suggested some humbling thoughts to your consideration ; but I fear you will have little relish for them, as you seem to indulge yourselves in very different views. Am I not rather to congratulate Christians, whose rank and figure in the world is so much superior to that of many of the brethren, and even of their

SECT.
VIII.

1 Cor.
iv. 8.

SECT. first apostle too? For now you are full ; now you
 VIII. are rich ; you enjoy so great a degree of prosper-
 ity and plenty, that methinks *you have even*
 1 Cor. *reigned as kings without us* :^a so happy in a va-
 iv. 8. riety of secular enjoyments, that you have hardly
 missed my company. And indeed *I wish you*
did reign, in the truest and noblest sense, and
 were altogether as happy as you think your-
 selves. I wish the most excellent powers of the
 human nature had, through divine grace, greater
 rule and sovereignty in your souls, *that we*, in
 the midst of all our present distress, *might also*
reign with you, and partake of your happiness,
 in that high degree, in which, if it were sin-
 cere and solid, our affection for you would ena-
 9 ble us to share it. And surely we sufficiently
 need such consolation as this ; *for I think God*
hath exhibited us, the apostles of his Son, like
 those gladiators which are brought out on the
 stage *last of all, as appointed to certain death*,^b
 and therefore not furnished with weapons of
 defence, nor allowed so much as a chance of
 escaping ; *for we are produced, as it were, on*
 a public theatre, and *made a spectacle to the*
 whole world of rational creatures, both *to an-*
 gels and men,^c who are all held in solicitous at-

now ye are rich, ye
 have reigned as kings
 without us : and I
 would to God ye did
 reign, that we also
 might reign with you.

9 For I think that
 God hath set forth
 as the apostles last,
 us it were appointed
 to death. For we are
 made a spectacle
 unto the world, and
 to angels, and to
 men.

^a *You have reigned as kings, &c.*] This is a proverbial expression of the most splendid and plentiful circumstances ; and some think, when the apostle adds, *I wish ye did reign*, he means, “ I wish you had the authority of princes, that ye might shelter and accommodate us amidst all our distresses and afflictions.” But one can hardly think he did indeed wish each of them a prince, or the civil power in their hands. It seems much more probable, that as spiritual objects were so familiar to his mind, he changes the idea in the manner the paraphrase expresses ; in which sense it seems that Christians are called *priests and kings*, (Rev. i. 6 ;) as it is certain they are called *a royal priesthood*. (1 Pet. ii. 9.)—I cannot think with Mr. L’Enfant, that this refers peculiarly to the factious pastors of the church at Corinth.

^b *Last of all.*] I cannot think, as Elsner seems to do, that the word *εσχάτοι* refers to the low rank which the apostle held in secular life ; or with Messieurs Calvin, Locke, and L’Enfant, that St.

Paul speaks of himself as the *last called apostle* ; but that there is a reference to the Roman custom of bringing forth those persons on the theatre on the after-part of the day, either to fight with each other, or with wild beasts, who were appointed to certain death, and had not that poor chance of escaping which those brought forth in the morning had. Compare Sen. Epist. cap. vii. Reeve’s Apol. Vol. I. p. 237. Such kind of spectacles were so common in all the provinces, that it is no wonder we should find such an allusion here. The word *αποδείξεν*, *exhibited*, and *δρασκον*, *a spectacle on the theatre*, have in this connexion a beautiful propriety. The whole passage is indeed full of high eloquence, and finely adapted to move their compassion in favour of those who were so generously exposing and sacrificing themselves for the public good.

^c *A spectacle to—angels and men.*] This representation is wonderfully pathetic and sublime : while they considered evil angels and men as beholding them with all the malignant, and good angels and men with all the benevolent passions, it must

10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ: we are weak, but ye are strong: ye are honourable, but we are despised.

tention to so strange and tragical a sight. Imagine not, that I have aggravated the representation; the more you attend to our circumstances, the more you will discern its justice: for *we [are]* treated like *fools*, babblers, and madmen, *for the sake of Christ*, (Acts xvii. 18; chap. xxvi. 24.) as if we were the weakest and most ignorant of mankind, because we preach the plain truths of the gospel, and endeavour to the utmost to exalt our Lord. *But ye [are]* wise in Christ: ye set up for a kind of Christian philosophers, of more refined understandings than your brethren, and think you have found out a political way at once of securing the blessings of the gospel, and escaping its inconveniences and persecutions. *We [are]* weak, in presence, in infirmities, and in sufferings: *but ye [are]* strong, have great confidence in yourselves, and are got above many of those tender alarms and impressions which hearts like ours are subject to, on a variety of occasions: *you [are]* honourable, adorned with extraordinary gifts, in which you are ready to glory, and many of you set off with circumstances of external distinction; *but we [are]* poor *despised* creatures, treated with contempt wherever we come. For *even to* 11 *this present hour*, after all the battles fought, and all the conquests already gained by the gospel, we are often exposed to circumstances of the extremest want and misery. Sometimes *we both hunger and thirst*, and amidst our charitable journeys to diffuse the gospel, hardly find entertainment of the plainest kind, to relieve our necessities, or money to purchase it. *And* our clothes are so worn out with travelling, and we are so ill-furnished for buying more, that we are often almost *naked*,^d not having decent raiment to wear, though we appear so often in public assemblies. *And* in many instances,

SECT.
VIII.
1 Cor.
iv. 10.

11 Even unto this present hour, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and

have a great tendency to inspire their minds with the most heroic sentiments. —Elsner has given an excellent collection of passages from heathen writers, in which such a figure is made use of by them.

^d *Are naked*, &c.] Surely one cannot imagine any more glorious triumph of the truth, than what it gained in these

circumstances, when St. Paul, with an impediment in his speech, and a personage, rather contemptible than graceful, appeared in a mean, and perhaps sometimes tattered dress, before persons of the highest rank, and yet commanded such attention, and made such impressions.

SECT. where our benevolent and important message are buffeted, and
 VIII. is heard, instead of being received with due respect, we *are* insulted and perhaps *buffeted*, by have no certain dwelling-place;
 1 Cor. the unruly and barbarous mob; *and* at best, if
 iv. 11. we now and then meet with a little more hospitable usage, it is for a very little while; for,

whereas you dwell in a rich and magnificent city, we *have no certain abode*, but are continually removing from one place to another.

12 *And* though we are engaged in a work of so great importance to the souls of men, which might well ingross all our time and care; yet such are the circumstances in which we are often placed, that we are obliged in duty and prudence, to *labour* in some secular calling, *working with our own hands*, to procure the necessary supports of the most frugal and parsimonious life. *Being* in the most insolent and provoking manner *reviled* to our faces, and loaded with every opprobrious name of contempt, we meekly *bless*, and pray for our enemies; *being persecuted*, we *endure it* patiently,

13 unable to right and help ourselves. *Being blasphemed*, and spoken of in the most scandalous, and, considering our sacred character, the most impious terms; we only *entreat* that men would more impartially examine our pretensions, that they may entertain more favourable sentiments concerning us; and in the mean time, we freely forgive them their rash and injurious censures. And on the whole, such is the usage we meet with, that *we are made and treated like the very filth of the world*,^e like the wretches, which being taken from the dregs of the people, are offered as expiatory sacrifices to

12 And labour, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it;

13 Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are

^e *Filth of the world.*] The word καθαριμα has a force and meaning here which no one word in our language can express; I have given what I am persuaded is the true meaning of it in the paraphrase, and must refer to Dr. Hen. More, (Theol. Works, p. 63.) and Dr. Whitby in loc. for the illustration of this bold and noble figure. Suidas says that these wretched victims were called καθαριμα, as their death was esteemed an expiation; and he tells us the word περιηματα, which we render *offscouring*, was also applied to them; and Bos (Exercit. p. 125.) illustrates this sense of the word by a very large and judicious

collection of Greek quotations. See also Dr. Ridley's Christian Passover, p. 22. It appears from some of these passages, that when the ashes of these unhappy men were thrown into the sea, these very words were used in the ceremony, γινε περιηματα, γινε καθαριμα; but the former of these titles was given them, in reference to that original signification of the words, which the paraphrase on the end of the verse expresses. That so wise and ancient a republic as that of Marseilles, originally a Greek colony, should have retained this savage usage, is astonishing; yet Servius expressly asserts it. Serv. in Æneid, Lib. III. Lin. 75.

the offscouring of all things unto this day.

the infernal deities among the Gentiles, and loaded with curses, affronts and injuries, in the way to the altars at which they are to bleed: [or like] the refuse of all things to this day, the very sweepings of the streets and stalls, a nuisance to all around us, and fit for nothing but to be trampled upon by the meanest and vilest of mankind

SECT.
VIII.

1 Cor.
iv. 13.

14 I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you,

I do not write these things to shame you, or in any degree to stain your credit with other churches, by such a representation, as if you were unmindful of my sufferings for the gospel; but considering the relation in which we stand to each other, and looking upon you as my beloved sons, I warn [you] of those dangers to which I fear you may be exposed, and of the regard which it is your duty and interest to pay to those who voluntarily subject themselves to so many evils on your account, that you ought surely to be the last to increase

15 For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

their burdens. And I may particularly urge this with respect to myself; for if you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, be they ever so many or ever so valuable, yet [you have] not many spiritual fathers, for in Christ Jesus I Paul have begotten you by the gospel: I preached it first among you, and was the happy means of your spiritual birth, and all the privileges of God's children which you receive by it. I beseech you, therefore, [that] with filial piety and duty ye be all imitators of me, keeping strictly to the faith which I taught you, and carefully copying my meekness and humility.

16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

with 16

17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

For this reason, that you may be the better able to trace my steps, and may be animated to do it with the greater care, I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved son, or dear convert, (Acts xix. 22,) and who, though yet but a young man, is remarkably faithful in the Lord, an excellent Christian, who will be able more perfectly to bring to your remembrance my ways in Christ, as I am every where teaching in every church where I come; by which you will perceive, that I do not act partially with respect to you, but proceed on general principles

SECT. of integrity and prudence, from which I no-
VIII. where allow myself to vary.

1 Cor. *Some, I hear, are puffed up in vain and proud*
iv. 18. *confidence, as if, after all I have said, I would* 18 Now some are
not come to you, and did not dare to appear in puffed up as though
a place where I have now so many opposers. I would not come to
you.

19 *But they are extremely mistaken, for I will* 19 But I will come
certainly come to you, and that quickly too, if to you shortly, if the
the Lord, who holds the reins of universal go- Lord will, and will
vernment in his hands, permit; and I will then know, not the speech
know and examine, not the confident speech and of them which are
florid talk of those that are thus puffed up, but the puffed up, but the
power they have to vindicate their pretensions, power.

20 *to oppose to mine. For the kingdom of God* 20 For the king-
is not in speech, in confident assertions, or in dom of God is not in
elegant forms of address, but is established in word, but in power.

21 *them the regard they require. What, there-* 21 What will ye?
fore, do you on the whole desire and choose? shall I come unto
That I should come to you, as it were, with a rod^f you with a rod, or in
of correction in my hand, using my apostolic love, and in the spirit
power for your chastisement; or, which for of meekness?
your sakes I should much rather choose, in
love and in the spirit of meekness and gentleness,
comforting and commending, instead of chas-
tising? You will, I hope, think seriously upon
the matter in time, before things are driven to
such an extremity as may not any longer leave
it in my choice or yours.

^f *With a rod of correction.*] That the apostles had often a miraculous power of inflicting death, and other temporal judgments, in case of aggravated offence, appears from other passages of scripture, Acts v. 5—10, chap. xiii. 10, 11; 1 Tim. i. 20; and is referred to more than once or twice, in these epistles to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. v. 5; 2 Cor. i. 23; chap. x. 6, 8; chap. xiii. 2, 3, 10. And I cannot mention these passages, without leading my reader to reflect on the wisdom of Providence, in permitting such oppo-

sition to arise against St. Paul, particularly at Corinth. It gave him an opportunity of making the strongest appeals to what they are supposed to know of his miraculous power; and had these appeals not been indeed founded on the most certain and evident truth, they must, instead of restoring him to their regards, as we find in fact they did, have been sufficient of themselves utterly to have ruined all his reputation and interest among them, had it before been ever so great.

IMPROVEMENT.

How adorable is the efficacy of divine grace which bore those zealous and faithful servants of Christ through all their labours and fatigues, when they were made a spectacle to the world, to angels and men! How glorious a spectacle! worthy surely, as any thing, since that wonderful scene on Calvary, of the eye of God himself.

SECT.

VIII.

Ver. 9.

How little are we to judge of the Divine favour by external circumstances, when those best of men were of all others the most miserable, farther than as their heavenly hope supported and animated them! And when that is taken into the account, who would not emulate their lot, though hungry and thirsty, though naked and destitute, without habitation, without protector, without friends? When we consider their share in the Divine friendship, when we consider the blessed effects of their labours, and the glorious crown which awaits them after all their sufferings; surely they must appear happy in proportion to the degree in which they seemed miserable, and glorious in proportion to the degree in which the world held them as infamous!

That illustrious person, whose epistles are now before us, knew not the pleasures of domestic life in many of its most endearing relations. But God made him a spiritual father to multitudes; and no doubt, as he urges the consideration on his children in Christ, he felt the joy arising from it strong in his own soul, when he said, I have begotten you in Christ Jesus by the gospel. Surely it ought never to have been forgotten by them; and if through the artifices of ill-designing men, and the remaining infirmities of their own character, it was sometimes and in some degree forgotten now, yet undoubtedly it would be remembered by them in the heavenly world for ever; even by as many as the Lord his God had graciously given him. And if there be any remembrance there that they once grieved him, it will be an engagement to all those offices of an eternal friendship which the exaltation of the heavenly state shall allow. In the meantime, his paternal affection for them wrought, not in a foolish fondness of indulgence, which in the language of Divine wisdom is hating a son, but in the character of a prudent and faithful parent, who, desirous that his children may be as wise and good as possible, will rather use the rod than suffer them to be undone. Yet when he speaks of using it, he speaks with regret, as one who would rather choose to act in the spirit of gentleness, and without any mixture of severity, how necessary soever. The whole of his subsequent conduct to the Corinthians, as far as it may be learned from this or the following epistle, bears a perfect consistency with these expressions, and illustrates their sincerity.

SECT. May God give to his ministers more of this truly apostolical
 VIII. spirit, more of those overflowings of holy love, attempering and
 ——— attempered by that ardent zeal against sin, and that firm reso-
 lution in the discharge of duty, which shone so brightly in the
 apostle, and in which he so freely and justly recommends him-
 self to the imitation of his children and his brethren.

SECT. IX.

*The apostle proceeds to mention the irregularities which prevailed in the
 Corinthian church ; and here handleth the case of the incestuous per-
 son, whom he commands them to separate from their communion.*
 1 Cor. v. 1, to the end.

I CORINTHIANS v. 1.

SECT.
 IX.

1 Cor.
 v. 1.

I HAVE spoken of coming to you with a rod
 of correction; and it is too probable I may
 be laid under a necessity of using it, though it
 be an unwilling necessity. For it is generally
reported,^a [that there is] a kind of lewdness
 among you, and that too such scandalous and
 enormous lewdness as is not heard of even among
 the heathen, degenerate as they are, and aban-
 doned as their practices are known to be, even
 that a certain person should have used criminal
 2 converse with his father's wife.^b One would
 have imagined that a scandal like this should
 have thrown the whole society into distress and
 humiliation like the public mourning of a Jew-
 ish synagogue on the apostasy or ejection of one
 of its members; and yet it is said that *ye are*
puffed up with this spirit of pride and carnality
 which I have been mentioning and reprov-
 ing. Should ye not rather have lamented on this sad oc-
 casion? and pursued those strenuous measures
 for reformation which the genius of the gospel

1 Cor. v. 1.

IT is reported com-
 monly, that there
 is fornication among
 you, and such for-
 nication as is not so
 much as named a-
 mongst the Gentiles,
 that one should have
 his father's wife.

2 And ye are puff-
 ed up, and have not
 rather mourned, that

* Generally reported.] Dr. Whitby
 thinks that the scandalous stories that
 were generally told among the heathen
 of the incestuous practices of primitive
 Christians, had their original from the
 misrepresentation of this fact. Many
 quotations, brought by this learned au-
 thor and others on this text, show that
 incest was held in high abomination
 among the heathen; and an enormity of
 this kind is (as well known,) called by

Cicero, *Scelus incredibile et inauditum, an
 incredible and unheard-of wickedness.* See
 also Grot. de Jure Bel. et Pac. Lib. II.
 Cap. v. § 14, No. 2.

^b Criminal converse.] Probably some
 father had parted with his wife, perhaps
 provoked by her indiscretion, and his
 son, to whom she was mother-in-law,
 had married her; for by 2 Cor. vii. 12,
 it seems probable the person injured
 was yet alive.

he that hath done this deed, might be taken away from among you.

3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed;

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

so evidently dictates, that he who hath committed this fact should be taken away from you, and be no longer allowed to continue in your communion? But however negligent you have been, and whatever consequence I draw upon myself, by interposing in this affair, I cannot, I will not be silent. *I am absent indeed in body*, and therefore cannot take those vigorous steps which my zeal for the honour of Christ, and my tender concern for your reputation and happiness, dictate: *but I am present in spirit*; ^c *I have a distinct view of all the circumstances of the case, and therefore in as determinate a manner as if I were actually present*, I have judged and passed sentence on him who I know has indeed committed this enormity. And the sentence I have passed is ⁴

this: *That ye being all solemnly gathered together in full assembly, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and my spirit being present with you, with the efficacious power of our Lord Jesus Christ, acting according to my determination, though I be at such a distance, and being ready to add an awful efficacy and sanction to your censure, Do, by a public and express act, deliver such an one by name to Satan,* ^d *to be by him, as the terrible executioner of the Divine justice and displeasure, chastised and tormented, in order to the destruction of the flesh, that, for this shameful indulgence of its lascivious appetites and desires, it may be emaciated and enfeebled, and the offender, alarmed by sufferings of so extraordinary and formidable a nature, if possible, may be brought to true repentance and humiliation, that so the immortal spirit may be saved, in the day of the*

^c *Present in spirit.*] Some think this refers to an extraordinary gift which St. Paul had of discerning clearly and circumstantially what was done at a distance. Compare Col. ii. 5; 2 Kings v. 26; chap. vi. 12. See Dr. Benson's Hist. Vol. II. p. 16.

^d *To deliver such an one to Satan, &c.*] Some think that, as Satan is considered as the head of all who are not under Christ as their head, that is, in the church of Christ, every one who was cut off from the church, must of course be deli-

vered over to Satan; but it seems much more reasonable to believe, that this refers to the infliction of some bodily pains or diseases, in which Satan might act as the instrument of the divine justice. Compare 1 Tim. i. 20, and this was for the destruction of the flesh; not directly of the fleshly principle, for in that sense it could not be opposed to the *saving the spirit in the day of the Lord*; but probably, as the paraphrase intimates, for the emaciating and enfeebling the powers of animal nature.

SECT.

IX.

1 Cor.
v. 3.

SECT. IX. Lord Jesus, from those infinitely more insupportable and everlasting agonies to which it might otherwise be doomed.

1 Cor.
v. 6.

And give me leave on this occasion farther to tell you, that *your boasting*, whether of such a person as your friend, if he be remarkable for any peculiar distinction in gifts, abilities and circumstances, or against him, as your enemy, if he be of an opposite faction, [*is*] *not* by any means good.^e Do you not know, in a familiar instance, which it may be profitable for you to recollect, that a little leaven quickly diffuses itself by a secret fermentation, till it leaveneth the whole mass. Thus will evil examples tend to spread in the church; and if a brand of infamy be not quickly set upon the incorrigible offender, wickedness will grow familiar, and lose its horror; so that many other members of your society may be polluted, ensnared, and dishonoured. Set yourselves therefore with a resolution and diligence, like that which the Jews show in all their dwellings, when the annual feast of the passover is approaching, to *purge out the old leaven*: search for it, as it were, with lighted candles, wherever you suspect any of it to lurk unobserved, that ye may indeed be entirely a new mass: as ye are by your Christian profession unleavened, let there be no mixture of any thing inconsistent with that simplicity and purity which the gospel teaches.

It is a diligence and resolution that becomes you; for we have not only the Divine command to enforce it, but this tender additional obligation, that *even Christ our passover was slain for us*.^f He hath made his precious blood the price of our redemption, that he might make it the means of our sanctification, and that we, instead of being smitten by the sword of the

6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

^e Your boasting is not good.] L'Enfant would render it interrogatively, *Have you not a fine subject for boasting?* which is indeed more animated than our version; but I think, not in the taste and manner of St. Paul, nor does it seem exactly to suit the original.

^f Christ our passover was slain.] It is well known, that Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, accuses

the Jews with having taken out of the book of Esdras the following words: "The passover is our Saviour and our refuge." L'Enfant thinks these words of St. Paul are an allusion to them.—It is a very inconclusive inference of some from this context, that this epistle was written about the time of the passover. Compare chap. xvi, 8.

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness: but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

avenging angel, might sit down to a divine banquet in peace. *Let us then keep the holy feast* which he hath at such an expense provided for us, and in which he feedeth us even with his own flesh; and let us celebrate it in a manner which may do him the greatest honour, and be most pleasing to the adorable Author of our liberty and our happiness; that is, *not with the old stale leaven* of uncleanness, so common in your Gentile state, *nor with the leaven of malignity and mischief*, which your Judaizing teachers would infuse, though it is as inconsistent with the benevolence, as the other with the purity of the gospel: *but* avoiding these with the strictest care, keep it *with the unleavened [bread] of sincerity and truth*, with the most simple and sincere desire of knowing and practising every branch of our duty; which, if we really have, it will keep us from all these evils, and secure an uniformity of behaviour honourable to our profession, and agreeable to the glorious scheme and design of its illustrious Author.

SECT.
IX.

1 Cor.
v. 8.

9 I wrote to you in an epistle, not to company with fornicators.

In this connection it occurs to me, and I conclude you remember that *I wrote to you in an epistle* which I sent you before your messengers reached me, *that you should not converse with fornicators and lewd persons,*^s or others of ill fame and character. *But* I think you must

10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous or extortioner, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

apprehend, that by what I then wrote, I intended *not entirely* to forbid all converse *with the lewd people of this world, or with covetous men, or extortioners, or idolaters* among your heathen neighbours; *for then*, as these characters so generally prevail among mankind in this degenerate state, *you must indeed go out of the world*, and seek some solitary abode in the wilderness, which is what I never intended to

11 But now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man

require or encourage. *But* the intent of what I then said, and of what *I have now written unto you*, is, *that if any who is named a Christian*

^s *Lewd persons.*] I have rendered *πορνοι, lewd persons*, in these verses, as I think it very plain the apostle intended the word should be taken in that extent; his argument concluding yet more

strongly against some other species of lewdness than against what is called *simple fornication*, detestable as that is. See Vol. I. p. 222, note ^f, and Vol. II. p. 220, note ^f.

SECT. brother be evidently a lewd person, or remarkably covetous, or in acts of occasional, though not stated and customary worship, an idolater, or even a railer, who labours to provoke others by foul language and insulting behaviour, or injures any in their absence by slanderous reports, or a drunkard, and in any other respects an abandoned sensualist or rapacious extortioner, you should not converse familiarly, or so much as eat with such an one, in common life, and much less in such religious solemnities as are peculiar to the church of Christ, which ought ever to be a pure and holy society.

1 Cor.
v. 11.

12 You must understand my caution with such a limitation as this: *for what have I to do, as a Christian apostle, to judge those that are without the pale of the church?* Of others indeed I may speak; *for do not even you, in your more private capacity, judge those that are within?* I have taught you that every private Christian should be concerned in his station to maintain the discipline of the church of Christ, and to bear his testimony against disorderly walkers,

12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

13 which may at present have a place in it. *But let it be remembered, that those who are without, God judgeth;*^h and he will find a way, sooner or later, to testify his awful displeasure against them for crimes which they have committed against the law of nature, and that acquaintance with it which he knows they actually had, or might have attained. *Therefore, in consideration of this, both in one view and the other, let it be your immediate care, as you regard the peace of the church and the safety of your own souls, speedily, and with all due solemnity, to take away from among yourselves the wicked person*ⁱ I have mentioned, and any others whose characters may, like his, be scandalous and infectious.

13 But them that are without, God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

^h *Those who are without, God judgeth.*] Dr. Whitby thinks this is an oblique reference to the mother-in-law of the incestuous person, who was a heathen; which, from the apostle's giving no directions concerning her, is not improbable. But I think the views of St. Paul

in this clause were more extensive, and have paraphrased them accordingly.

ⁱ *Take away, &c.*] This seems plainly to imply, that the Corinthians had a power of *excommunication* in themselves, as has generally been pleaded by congregational writers from this text.

IMPROVEMENT.

HAPPY are those churches who have it in their power to ex-
ercise godly discipline, and to chase from their communion such
members as are its reproach and scandal! Happy they, who
having this power, have the courage and fidelity to use it, so as
not to be shamed and condemned by it. Let us not be too
much surprised, that offences come, and if there are, even in
Christian societies, some enormities beyond what are commonly
heard of among the Gentiles. It is no wonder, if such abandon
themselves, yea, if they are in righteous judgment abandoned
of God, to the uncontrollable rage of their own lusts and cor-
ruptions, and the great enemy of souls be suffered to carry them
captive at his pleasure. Let it however be our concern, that
when this is the case, the wicked person be taken away. And
though the extraordinary power which the apostles had, be long
ceased, and we cannot deliver over offenders for correction to
Satan, as they did, let us take such methods as are still open,
for purging the old leaven out of our churches; and O, that we
may be enabled to purge it out of our hearts! remembering
Christ our passover, who was slain for us, feeding daily upon
him by faith, and keeping the sacred festival at once with joy
and gladness, and with simplicity and sincerity of heart.

Lamentable indeed is it that so many vices should prevail in
human nature; that he, who would avoid all society with per-
sons of a bad character, must needs go out of the world. But
most lamentable of all, that any one who is called a brother,
should be a fornicator, or covetous, an idolater, or railer, a
drunkard, or an extortioner. May God preserve us from such
detestable crimes, and may he purge out all such spots as these
from our feasts of charity! and to that end may he quicken our
zeal to bear a testimony against them, in every such method as
suits our relation and circumstances of life! Above all, let not
any ever imagine, that being joined in communion with a
Christian church, can excuse the guilt of such immoral and
scandalous practices, for which the wrath of God comes even
upon the children of disobedience among the heathen. God will
have his time to judge them that are without; and not only
Christians at large, as some may fondly and perhaps profanely
be ready to call themselves, but Mahometans and Pagans too,
shall find articles like these, sitting upon their souls with a
dreadful weight, and if sincere repentance do not make way
for pardon, plunging them into the lowest abyss of misery, into
a state of everlasting separation from the blessed God, and all
his holy and acceptable servants.

SECT.

IX.

Ver. 13.

SECT. X.

The Apostle reproves the Corinthians for prosecuting their brethren in heathen courts; and solemnly warns them of the sad consequences which would attend the indulgence of those criminal dispositions and practices in which Christianity found them, and from which it was intended to deliver them. 1 Cor. vi. 1—11.

1 CORINTHIANS VI. 1.

SECT.
X.1 Cor.
vi. 1.

I HAVE already mentioned one very great irregularity among you; and now I am under an unhappy necessity of animadverting upon another; which is, that you enter into suits of law with each other in heathen courts. And is this possible? *Dare any of you indeed act so shameful a part? Can you really be so imprudent, having any matter [of complaint] against another, as to refer it to the decision of men, who lie under so many temptations to be unjust, and not of the saints,^a of your Christian brethren, from whose sanctity of character and profession you might reasonably expect the most equitable usage, and the utmost tenderness in accommodating differences, upon the easiest terms that justice will allow. Do you not yet indeed know, have you never been told it by me, or by any other, that the saints shall in the great day judge the world? that they shall be assessors with Christ in that solemn judgment when he shall condemn all the ungodly? (Compare Mat. xix. 28.) And if the world is shortly to be judged by you, are ye unworthy of determining the most inconsiderable matters which daily occur in your secular affairs?*

3 I repeat it again; and you will find it a striking argument, if you will allow yourselves to reflect upon it; *know you not that we shall*

1 COR. VI. 1.

DARE any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

3 Know ye not, that we shall judge

^a *Unjust—saints.*] The heathen judges, as Paul seems here to insinuate, or rather in effect to declare, were generally unjust: Christians were generally good, righteous, and holy men. There might be exceptions on each side, but the apostle's argument turns on what might commonly be supposed. The saints,

who are to judge angels, are not merely professing Christians.—To suppose that the case of the incestuous Corinthian had been carried before a heathen judge, as Mr. Locke supposes, seems entirely groundless. A thousand other disputes might have occasioned the remonstrance before us.

angels? how much more things that pertain to this life.

judge even the fallen angels^b themselves, who, notwithstanding all their malignity and pride, shall be brought to that tribunal at which you, having gloriously passed your own trial, shall be seated with Christ your victorious Lord, when by his righteous sentence he shall send these rebellious spirits to that flaming prison which Divine justice hath prepared for them. And [are ye] not then much more apparently [worthy to judge] the little trifling affairs which relate to this mortal life? If therefore ye, who

SECT.
X.
1 Cor.
vi. 3.

4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

have such great honours and dignities in view, have, in the mean time, any little controversies with each other, relating to the affairs of this life, do ye set those to determine them, who are of no esteem at all in the church,^c but whom ye know to be idolaters, despisers of the gospel, and enemies to your great Master and his cause, as your heathen neighbours undoubtedly are?

5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise

I speak [this] to your shame; and hope you blush while you read it. Are things indeed come to such a pass in your church, celebrated as it is, and boasting so much of its wisdom, that this should be necessary? What, is there

^b Shall judge angels.] Had the apostle, as Dr. Whitby supposed, referred to the power which many Christians had of driving out demons from those who were possessed by them, he would not have spoke of this as a future thing, nor can we suppose it to have been common to all Christians, nor would it have afforded an argument equally forcible with that which the paraphrase suggests. Mr. Reynolds extends the interpretation yet farther, and seems to infer from it, that the holy angels are still in a state of probation, and shall be rewarded at the last day, according to the degree of their fidelity and activity in the services assigned to them by Christ, as the head of angels, who shall take his redeemed from among men, to be assessors with him in that final sentence. Reyn. of Augp. 183. But the angelic legions are represented in quite another view, namely, as ministering to Christ, adding pomp to his appearance, and executing his sentence, which, I think, sufficiently proves that this is an ungrounded interpretation, and that if any such judgment is to pass with regard to them, it must be at some other time, and in some other

place. But there seems a peculiar dignity and propriety in this determination of the great God, that when the devils, who are expressly said to be reserved in chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day, shall be condemned, the saints, being raised to the seats of glory which these wicked spirits have forfeited and lost, should assist in that sentence which shall display the victory of Christ over them in these his servants once their captives, and will, no doubt, render the sentence itself yet more intolerable, to creatures of such malignity and pride.

^c Do ye set them, &c.] Our translation renders it, set them to judge, who are least esteemed in the church; as if the apostle had said, "Take the meanest Christian, rather than any heathen." But I follow that preferred by Beza and Whitby. Limborch would understand *ἐπίκρια* as equivalent to *δικαστήρια*, and render it as a piece of advice, "constitute to yourselves courts of judicature, relating to civil affairs."—Elsner shows, that *καθίσιν* signifies to place persons on judicial seats. Observ. Vol. II. p. 93.

SECT. not one wise intelligent person among you all,
 X. who may be able to determine the cause of a
 Christian brother? But though the civil consti-
 1 Cor. tution allows you to decide these things among
 vi. 6. yourselves, one brother hath a suit against ano-
 ther, and this before infidels,^d who cannot but be
 greatly scandalized at this, and take occasion
 from your mutual quarrels and accusations to
 brand the whole body of you as injurious and
 avaricious; who, while you pretend to be so far
 superior to secular views, are yet so strongly
 attached to them, that with all your professions
 of universal benevolence and brotherly love,
 you cannot forbear wronging one another?

7 Therefore, whoever may have the right on his
 side, on this or that particular question, *even*
this is altogether a fault among you, that you
 bring it under the cognizance of heathens,^e on
 whatever occasion it be, *that ye have such law-*
suits and contests with each other. Why do ye
not rather endure wrong patiently, and sit down
 by the loss? *Why do ye not rather suffer your-*
selves to be defrauded, than seek such a reme-
 dy as this? But indeed, to speak plainly, *you*
do wrong, and you defraud even [your] bre-
 thren. By such proceedings as these, you do
 much greater injury to the church of Christ,
 and the common cause of religion, than you
 can sustain from any particular brother against
 whom you advance a complaint. Nor is this
 the only thing wherein you are to blame, nor
 the only instance in which you injure each
 other.

9 And permit me to expostulate with you a
 little on this head. *What!* can you contentedly
 sacrifice this great and glorious hope which the
 gospel gives you? With all your boasted know-
 ledge, *do ye not indeed know*, that the unjust shall
 not inherit the kingdom of God? *Be not deceived*

man among you? no
 not one that shall
 be able to judge be-
 tween his brethren?

6 But brother go-
 eth to law with bro-
 ther, and that be-
 fore the unbelievers.

7 Now therefore
 there is utterly a
 fault among you, be-
 cause ye go to law
 one with another:
 why do ye not ra-
 ther take wrong?
 why do ye not ra-
 ther suffer yourselves
 to be defrauded?

8 Nay, ye do wrong
 and defraud, and
 that your brethren.

9 Know ye not,
 that the unrighteous
 shall not inherit the
 kingdom of God? Be
 not deceived: neither

^d One brother hath a suit against another,
 &c.] Josephus observes, that the Ro-
 mans (who were now masters of Co-
 rinth,) permitted the Jews in foreign
 countries to decide private affairs,
 where nothing capital was in question,
 among themselves; and from hence Dr.
 Lardner argues the justice of this rebuke
 of St. Paul, as there is no room to doubt
 but Christians might have had the same

privilege, as they were looked upon as a
 Jewish sect. Credibility, Vol. I. p. 165.
 But separate from that, they might cer-
 tainly by mutual consent have chosen
 their brethren as referees.

^e Even this is altogether a fault among
 you.] That ὁδὴ should be rendered *even*,
 Raphelius hath well observed, and prov-
 ed. Annot. ex Herod. in loc.

fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

by a vain imagination, that the Christian name and privileges will secure you in the practice of your vices: for I now solemnly assure you, as I have often done, that *neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate persons, who give themselves up to a soft indolent way of living, and can endure no hardships in the way of duty and honour; nor Sodomites, those infamous degraders of human nature: Nor 10 thieves, nor those who are insatiably covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor rapacious persons, who by extortion, or any other kind of violence, invade the property of their neighbours; shall inherit that pure and peaceful region, the kingdom of God, where holiness and love must for ever reign, under the auspicious government of his Son.*

SECT.
X.
1 Cor.
vi. 9.

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

And while I write this, excuse me, that I 11 think it my duty solemnly, though tenderly, to call you, my dear brethren, to recollect, that such detested creatures as these, were some of you in your unconverted state! as many of your neighbours know, and as you yourselves, with deep humility and agony of soul, confessed. But ye are washed, not merely by the baptism of water: but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified; Divine grace has made a happy change in your state and temper; and ye are purified and renewed, as well as discharged from the condemnation to which ye were justly obnoxious, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of him whom we are now taught, through that common Saviour, to call with complacency our God. You ought therefore ever to maintain the most grateful sense of this important blessing, to stand at the remotest distance from sin, and to be tender of the peace and honour of a society which God hath founded by his extraordinary interposition, and into which he hath been pleased in so wonderful a manner to bring even you, who were once in the most infamous and deplorable state.

IMPROVEMENT.

ALAS! How great a reproach do we bring on our Christian profession, by so immoderate an attachment to our secular interests! How much does the family of our common Father suf-

SECT. fer, while brother goes to law with brother! What are these
 x. little interests of mortal life, that the heirs of salvation, by
 Ver. 6. whom angels are to be judged, should wrangle about them, and
 for the sake of them do wrong, and that even to their brethren!

8, 9 Men had need, where such a temper prevails, to examine
 themselves, and take heed that they be not deceived; for though
 good men may fall into some degrees of this evil, through ne-
 gligence or mistake, yet certainly it looks too much like the
 9, 10 character of such of whom the apostle testifies, that they shall
 not inherit the kingdom of God. Let us observe, that in this
 catalogue are contained, not only the most infamous and enor-
 mous offenders, but some, who perhaps may be tempted, because
 of their freedom from flagitious crimes, to think much better of
 themselves than they ought. We find here the effeminate, and
 covetous, and revilers, and extortioners, ranked with adulterers,
 and fornicators, with thieves and drunkards, with idolaters and
 Sodomites. We can never be secure from danger of falling
 into the greatest sins, till we learn to guard against the least;
 or rather till we think no evil small; viewing every sin in its
 contradiction to the nature of God, and in the sad aspect it
 bears with regard to an eternal state.

11 But how astonishing is it to reflect, that when the apostle is
 speaking of persons of such infamous characters, he should be
 able to add, in his address to his Christian brethren at Corinth,
 And such were some of you! Who must not adore the riches
 and sovereignty of Divine grace? were such as these the best
 of the heathen world? were such as these prepared by their
 distinguished virtues to receive farther assistance? let us rather
 pay our homage to that grace, which went, as it were, into the
 suburbs of hell, to gather from thence citizens of heaven. And
 let the worst of men learn, not to despair of salvation, when
 made sincerely desirous of being washed and sanctified, as well
 as justified, in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit
 of our God. It is that name, it is that Spirit alone, which ac-
 complishes works like these. And, blessed be God, all the
 wonders of this kind were not exhausted in those early ages,
 but some have been reserved for us, on whom the end of the
 world is come: the gospel hath exerted its triumphs in our
 own days, and they shall be renewed in those of our children.
 Only let none from hence presume to turn the grace of God
 into wantonness; lest instead of being among the few, who are
 made the trophies of the Divine mercy, they should perish with
 the multitude of the ungodly world, who die in their pollutions,
 and go down to final and irreversible condemnation.

SECT. XI.

Whereas some among the newly-converted Corinthians might not be sufficiently sensible of the enormity of the sin of fornication, the apostle, after some useful reflections on things really indifferent, expresses himself strongly on that head, and pleads those views peculiar to Christianity, which especially illustrate the heinousness of it. 1 Cor. vi. 12, to the end.

1 COR. VI. 12.

ALL things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

1 CORINTHIANS VI. 12.

I KNOW some of you at Corinth allow yourselves to philosophize with great liberty, and find many excuses for doing things which others conscientiously scruple: but as matters at present stand, I think it necessary to give you some cautions upon this head. Suppose the things in question to be as indifferent in their own nature as many of you would fain persuade yourselves and others they are: I will, for argument sake, grant that *all these things are lawful for me*; but at the same time you must acknowledge, if you reflect ever so little, that *all such things are not convenient*: circumstances may make it improper for me to do that which is not absolutely and universally criminal. And though it be allowed that *all things in question are lawful for me*, nevertheless *I will not be brought under the power of any such thing*: But am solicitous to maintain such a superiority to appetite and passion as becomes a man and a Christian in these cases.

SECT.
XI.

1 Cor.
vi. 12,

13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it

This maxim may be particularly applied to the supposed difference between one kind of food and another. All *meats* capable of ministering to our nourishment [are] indifferently made for the use of the belly, and the belly is made for receiving and digesting meats. It is true; but then it ought to be remembered that the time will quickly come when *God will destroy both it and them*; meats, and the organs by which they have been received, and this animal frame which has been nourished by them, shall be mixed together in the grave, and moulder into dust. Since therefore they refer only to this mortal body, so soon to be reduced to its first mean principles, it is certainly beneath the

SECT. dignity of the Christian character to be a slave and them. Now the
 XI. to this or that kind of meats; or in any instan- body is not for forni-
 ces to indulge this perishing flesh, so as to in- cation, but for the
 1 Cor. jure the souls of others or hazard our own. Lord; and the Lord
 vi. 13. for the body.

But if any man extend the maxim I have mentioned above, to patronize any kind of lewdness, it would be a groundless and most unjustifiable inference: for it is most certain that the body is not made for so infamous a purpose as fornication, nor can the commission of it be ever necessary or expedient: but it was, on the contrary, formed for the service of the Lord, that while we continue in it we might devote all our animal as well as rational powers to our great Creator and Redeemer; and the Lord is in an important sense for the body, he is the great Saviour of the body as well as of the soul, and will make it at last appear that he hath not forgotten the meaner part of our nature in the gracious scheme he

14 hath formed for our felicity. *And this scheme shall surely be effectual; for God the Father hath both raised up the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead to an immortal life, and will also raise us up in like manner, by his divine and almighty power, and transform these bodies of ours into a resemblance of the glorified body of our Lord; which should certainly raise us above all impure affections and desires, and engage us to live in the body in some conformity to so divine and glorious a hope.*

14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

15 Enter, I beseech you, into the thought; and let me expostulate freely with those who are ready to forget it. *Know ye not, indeed, that as your bodies make an essential part of yourselves, they are to be considered as members of Christ, belonging, as it were, to his body, and in that view under his care, as to their final and everlasting happiness with him. Shall I then take these which I am taught to look upon as in an important sense the members of Christ, and prostitute them to so infamous a purpose as to make them the members of an harlot by unlawful embraces? God forbid! It is a thing not to be thought of without the utmost abhorrence and*
 16 indignation. *What, know ye not that he who is thus joined to an harlot is one body with her?*

15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.

16 What, know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for

SECT.
XI.

1 Cor.
vi. 16.

two (saith he,) shall
be one flesh.

For say [*the Divine oracles,*] speaking of that conjunction which whoredom prostitutes to the dishonour of matrimony, so wisely and graciously ordained by God, (Gen. ii. 24.) *Theg two,* that is, the man and his wife, *shall be one flesh.*

17 But he that is
joined unto the Lord,
is one spirit.

But on the other hand, *he that is joined to the Lord* by a true faith, *is one spirit* with him.

And as the head and members of the natural body are one, as they are acted upon by the same spirit, so the same Divine and holy Spirit which lives in Christ as the Head, is communicated to us from him; just as the vital spirits are communicated from the head to the limbs. Now what thought can be more monstrous than that any one should think of being, at the same time, one spirit with the Lord, and one flesh with an harlot? Let this therefore be instead

18 Flee fornication.
Every sin that a man
doeth, is without the
body; but he that
committeth fornication,
sinneth against
his own body.

of ten thousand arguments to engage you to *flee whoredom*: concerning which, one may farther plead, that *every [other] sin which a man practises is without the body*; its effects fall not so directly upon the body, but often more immediately upon the mind.^a *But he that committeth whoredom*, or any kind of lewdness, *sinneth particularly against his own body*,^b not only polluting and debasing it, by making it one with so infamous a creature, but perhaps infecting and enfeebling, wasting and consuming it, which these vices, when grown habitual and frequent, have an apparent tendency to effect.

(Compare Prov. v. 11; Job xxxvi. 14.) There is also another view, in which the baseness of this crime must appear to you, Christians, in consequence of your relation to that blessed agent, the Spirit of God. Have you not all been baptized in his name, and instructed in

^a *Every [other] sin, &c.]* It would be unreasonable to insist on the most rigorous interpretation of these words; but the general sense is plain and true, and I suppose, that on the whole, there is no other sin by which the body receives equal detriment, considering not only its nature, but how much it has prevailed.

^b *He that committeth whoredom, sinneth against his own body.]* This is well illustrated by a fine passage of Xenophon, produced by Raphelius here, in which

Socrates is represented as saying, "that intemperate men hurt themselves far more than others; whereas others sinners secure some profit to themselves, though they are injurious to others." —It is evident that *πορνεία* must here signify any unlawful commerce between persons of different sexes, since whoredom with married women is as directly contrary both to the honour and health of the body, as with single.

SECT. your relation to him? *What, know you not that* ye not that your
 XI. *your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost* which body is the temple
 of the Holy Ghost
 — is in you, dedicated to him, and inhabited by which is in you, which
 ye have of God, and
 1 Cor. him; even that spirit which you receive of God, ye are not your own?
 vi. 19. as his most valuable gift? And, on the whole, in
 whatever view you consider yourselves, it will
 appear that *ye are not* by any means *your own*
 property, nor can be justly at your own disposal,
 to seek your present gratification without con-
 trol, or regard to the will of a superior.

- 20 For the contrary is most apparent; *ye are* 20 For ye are bought
bought with a price, and that infinitely beyond with a price; there-
 what you can pretend to be worth. Therefore, fore glorify God in
 far from doing any thing to bring a dishonour your body and in
 on religion, you ought in every action, word, your spirit, which
 and sentiment, to own yourselves his property, are God's.
 and exert yourselves to the utmost, in a course
 of vigorous and constant obedience, to glorify
 God both with your body and with your spirit,
 which are, by the justest title, God's; as he hath
 not only created, preserved, and maintained
 you, but by the invaluable blood of his Son pur-
 chased and redeemed you to himself, and by
 his Holy Spirit taken possession of you, and
 marked you for his own.

IMPROVEMENT.

How peculiar is the excellence of the Christian religion!
 With what incomparable advantages doth it enforce all the les-
 sons of moral virtue which it teaches! With what holy disdain
 should we look on the baits of sense, and the pollutions which
 Ver. 15. are in the world through lust, if we seriously and often reflect-
 19 ed on these two things—That our bodies are the members of
 Christ, and that they are the temples of the Holy Ghost! Let
 it be our care, that they may not only be nominally, but really
 17 so: That we may by a living faith be united to the Lord, so
 as to become one spirit with him, animated by that Spirit which
 resides in him and dwells in all who are truly his.

Let us, as often as we are tempted to alienate ourselves from
 the service of God, reflect upon the price with which we are
 20 bought. How great, how important a price, which we should
 never think of but with secret shame, as well as admiration and
 love! O Lord, hast thou paid such a ransom for me, and shall I
 act as if I thought even this not enough? as if thou hadst acquir-
 ed only a partial and imperfect right to me, and I might divide
 myself between thee and strangers, between thee and thine ene-

mies? O may we be entirely thine! and make it the business of the latest day and hour of our lives, to glorify God with our bodies and with our spirits, which are his! SECT. XI.

Under the influence of this thought, may we effectually enter into the wise and pious suggestions of the apostle; and guard not only against things absolutely and universally unlawful, but likewise against those which, in present circumstances, may be inconvenient. May we be ever ready to exert a holy freedom of soul, and a superiority to whatever may ensnare and enslave us! which we shall more easily obtain, if we reflect on the transitory duration of the objects of appetite and sense; how soon the things we enjoy, and those bodies by which we enjoy them, shall be reduced to the dust, out of which they were taken. God destroys all that is present and visible, that we may look more intensely for a kingdom that cannot be moved. He reduces our bodies to putrefaction, that we may learn to cultivate with greater care the interest of a never-dying soul; which, if we faithfully and diligently pursue, God, who hath raised up his Son as our Surety and Saviour, will also raise us up by his own power, to enjoyments sublime, incorruptible, and eternal. O Lord! we would wait for thy salvation, and in the meanwhile would do thy commandments; and, animated by so exalted a hope, would purify ourselves even as thou art pure. Ver. 12.

SECT. XII.

The Apostle proceeds to answer certain questions which the Corinthians had put to him; and, first, what related to the marriage-state: and in these introductory verses, he determines that in some circumstances it should be entered into and continued in, but in others forborne; and forbids wives to depart from their husbands. 1 Cor. vii. 1—11.

1 COR. VII. 1.

1 CORINTHIANS VII. 1.

NOW concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

I NOW proceed to give you my opinion concerning those things about which you wrote to me. And I begin with that concerning the lawfulness or expedience of marriage. And here I must first observe, that as to its expedience, [*it is*] in present circumstances good for a man, where he is entirely master of himself, to have nothing to do with a woman; so many are the conveniencies which recommend a single life to those who are proof against some of its most obvious temptations. SECT. XII.

1 Cor. vii. 1.

2 Nevertheless, to

Nevertheless, as the 2

SECT. God of nature has for certain wise reasons im-
 XII. planted in the sexes a mutual inclination to
 1 Cor. each other, *in order to prevent fornication*, and
 vii. 2. every other species of uncleanness, *let every
 man have and retain his own proper wife, and
 let every woman have and retain her own proper
 husband*: for neither divorce nor polygamy are
 by any means agreeable to the genius of the
 gospel.

3 *Let the husband*, where this relation is com-
 menced, *render all due benevolence to the wife,*
and in like manner also the wife to the husband:
 let them on all occasions be ready mutually to
 oblige and consult the happiness of each other's
 life. And let them not imagine that there is
 any perfection in living separate from each
 other, as if they were in a state of celibacy.

3 Let the husband
 render unto the wife
 due benevolence:
 and likewise also the
 wife unto the hus-
 band.

4 *For the wife hath not in this respect power over
 her own body, but hath by the marriage-cove-
 nant transferred it to the husband; and in like
 manner also, the husband hath not power over his
 own body, but it is, as it were, the property of
 the wife; their engagements being mutual, so
 that on every occasion conscience obliges them
 to remain appropriate to each other, and con-
 sult their mutual good.*

4 The wife hath not
 power of her own
 body, but the hus-
 band: and likewise
 also the husband hath
 not power of his own
 body, but the wife.

5 *Withdraw not therefore from the company of
 each other, unless [it be] by consent for a time;
 that ye may be at leisure to devote yourselves
 more intensely to fasting and prayer, and that
 ye may come together again as usual, lest Satan
 tempt you on account of your incontinence, and
 take occasion, from the irregular sallies of
 animal nature, to fill you with thoughts and
 passions which marriage was, in its original
 institution, intended to remedy.*

5 Defraud ye not
 one the other, ex-
 cept it be with con-
 sent for a time, that
 ye may give your-
 selves to fasting and
 prayer; and come
 together again, that
 Satan tempt you not
 for your incontinen-
 cy.

6 *But you will observe that I say this by per-
 mission from Christ, but not by any express
 command^a which he gave in person in the days
 of his flesh, or gives by the inspiration and sug-
 gestion of his Spirit now; by which inspiration*

6 But I speak this
 by permission, and
 not of command-
 ment.

^a *By permission.*] I cannot, with Mr.
 Cradock, think that the meaning of
 this clause is, "I permit marriage,
 but do not enjoin it;" and have else-
 where observed, that this verse, and
 others in this context nearly parallel to

it, will be so far from affording, on any
 interpretation, an objection against the
 general inspiration of St. Paul's epistles,
 that they will rather strengthen the
 proof of it. See Essay on Inspiration
 in Vol. III.

you may conclude I am guided, when I lay in no such precautions as these. SECT. XVII.

7 For I would that all men were even as I myself: but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

But as for the main question we are now upon, *I could wish that all men were in this respect even as myself*; that all Christians could as easily bear the severities of a single life in present circumstances, and exercise as resolute a command over their natural desires.^b *But every man has his proper gift of God, one in this kind or manner, and another in that.* So that though I give the best advice and example I can, I would not exalt myself on account of this attainment, nor despise those that have it not.

1 Cor. vii. 7.

8 I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.

9 But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

But as to unmarried men, who, like me, have buried their wives, and to the widows, I say it is good for them (if they conveniently can,) to continue, as I do, in the widowed state. But if they have not attained to such a degree of temperance as to be easy in it, let them by all means marry. For though it be better to live calmly and soberly in a state of widowhood than to marry, it is undoubtedly much better to marry a second or a third time, than to burn, and to be tormented with those restless passions which some in such circumstances feel.

10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:

11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife,

But as to those that are married,^c [it is] not I [who] command, but the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who enjoins that the wife should not withdraw herself from [her] husband: But if she be withdrawn by her own rash and foolish act, let her not by any means contract another marriage, but remain unmarried, or rather if it may be accomplished by any submission on her side, let her be reconciled to [her] husband, that they may if possible live in such an union and harmony as the relation requires. And let not the husband dismiss [his] wife on any light account, or indeed for any thing short of adul-

^b *That all men were even as myself.*] Common sense requires us to limit this expression as in the paraphrase; for it would be a most flagrant absurdity to suppose that St. Paul wished marriage might entirely cease. It shows therefore how unfair and improper it is, in various cases, to strain the apostle's words to the utmost rigour, as if he perpetually used the most critical exactness; but indeed

chap. ix. 22, is so full an instance to the contrary, that it is not necessary to multiply remarks of this kind.

^c *To those that are married.*] The translation published by the English Jesuits at Bordeaux, renders it, *to those who are united in the sacrament of marriage*; which I mention as one instance selected from a vast number, of the great dishonesty of that translation.

SECT. tery. For whatever particular reasons Moses
 XII. might have for permitting divorces on some
 1 Cor. slighter occasions, Christ, our great Legislator,
 vii. 11. who may reasonably expect higher degrees of
 purity and virtue in his followers, as their as-
 sistances are so much greater, hath seen fit ex-
 pressly to prohibit such separation, and we, his
 apostles, in our decisions upon this matter,
 must guide ourselves by the authority of his
 determination.

IMPROVEMENT.

THE decisions of the holy apostle are here given with such gravity, seriousness, and purity, that one would hope, delicate as the subject of them is, they will be received without any of that unbecoming levity which the wantonness of some minds may be ready to excite on such an occasion.

It becomes us humbly to adore the Divine wisdom and goodness manifested in the formation of the first human pair, and in keeping up the different sexes through all succeeding ages, in
 Ver. 2. so just a proportion that every man might have his own wife, and every woman her own husband, that the instinct of nature
 4 might, so far as it is necessary, be gratified without guilt, and an holy seed be sought, which being trained up under proper discipline and instruction, might supply the wastes that death is continually making, and be accounted to the Lord for a generation: that so virtue and religion, for the sake of which alone it is desirable that human creatures should subsist, may be transmitted through every age, and earth become a nursery for heaven.

With these views let marriages be contracted, when it is proper they should be contracted at all. Let none imagine the state itself to be impure, and let it always be preserved unde-
 5 filed. Let all occasion of irregular desire be prudently guarded against by those who have entered into it. And let all Christians, in every relation, remember that the obligations of devotion are common to all, and that Christ and his apostles seem to take it for granted that we shall be careful to secure proper seasons for fasting as well as for prayer, so far as may be needful, in order that the superior authority of the mind over the body may be exercised and maintained, and that our petitions to the throne of grace may be offered with greater intenseness, copiousness, and ardour.

SECT. XIII.

The apostle exhorts Christians not to break marriage on account of difference in religion; and urges in the general, contentment with the stations in which they were called, and a concern to serve God in their proper condition, whether married or single, bound or free. 1 Cor. vii. 12—24.

1 COR. VII. 12.

1 CORINTHIANS VII. 12.

BUT to the rest speak I, not the Lord, if any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away,

I HAVE reminded you of the decision of Christ with respect to the affair of divorce: *now as to the rest of the persons and cases to which I shall address myself, it is to be observed, that I speak according to what duty or prudence seems on the whole to require; and it is not to be considered as if it were immediately spoken by the Lord. If any Christian brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she consent to dwell with him, notwithstanding the diversity of their religious persuasions, let him not dismiss her. And on the other hand, if any Christian wife have an unbelieving husband, and he consent to dwell with her, let her not dismiss him,^a nor separate herself from him, though the legal constitution of the country in which she lives may allow her to do it. For in such a case as this, *the unbelieving husband is so sanctified to the wife, and the unbelieving wife is so sanctified to the husband,*^b that their matrimonial converse is as lawful as if they were both of the same faith: *otherwise your children, in these mixed cases, were unclean, and must be looked upon as unfit to be admitted to those peculiar ordinances by which the seed of God's people are distinguished; but now they are confessedly holy,*^c*

SECT. XIII.

1 Cor. vii. 12.

13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: elsewhere your children unclean; but now are they holy.

^a *Let her not dismiss him.*] I have elsewhere observed, that in these countries, in the apostle's days, the wives had a power of divorce as well as the husband. See Vol. II. p. 220, note 2.

^b *Is sanctified, &c.*] Some think the meaning is, "the Christian may convert the infidel;" as appears, in that the children of such marriages are brought up Christians. But this cannot possibly be the sense; for that they were brought up so, was not to be sure always fact, and where it was, there was no need of proving from thence the conversion of the parent, which would in itself be much more apparent than the education of the child.

^c *Now they are holy.*] On the maturest and most impartial consideration of this text, I must judge it to refer to *infant-baptism*. Nothing can be more apparent than that the word *holy* signifies persons who might be admitted to partake of the distinguishing rites of God's people. Compare Exod. xix. 6; Deut. vii. 6; chap. xiv. 2; chap. xxvi. 19; chap. xxxiii. 3; Ezra ix. 2. with Isa. xxxv. 8; chap. lii. 1; Acts x. 28, &c. And as for the interpretation which so many of our brethren, the Baptists, have contended for, that *holy* signifies *legitimate*, and *unclean*, *illegitimate*: (not to urge that this seems an unscriptural sense of the word,) nothing can be more evident, than that

SECT. and are as readily admitted to baptism in all our
XIII. churches, as if both the parents were Christians;
so that the case, you see, is in effect decided by
this prevailing practice. *However, if the unbelieving party, in such circumstances as these, be absolutely determined, and will depart, let him or her depart, and take the course they think best; and the consequence is, that a brother or a sister, who hath been united to such a wife or husband in matrimonial bonds, is by such a conduct of a former partner discharged from future obligation, and is not in bondage in such [cases.] But let it be always remembered, that God hath by his gospel called us to peace; and therefore it ought to be our care, to behave in as inoffensive a manner as possible, in all the relations of life; that so, if there must be a breach, the blame may not be chargeable upon the Christian.*

1 Cor.
vii. 15.

15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.

16 And it is worth your while to be very careful in your behaviour to those who thus make, as it were, a part of yourselves, that you may adorn the gospel you profess, by the most amiable and engaging conduct: *for it is possible the unbeliever may be thereby gained to Christianity. Let each therefore reflect on his own concern in this observation. For how knowest thou, O wife, but thou mayest save [thine] husband? Or how knowest thou, O husband, but thou mayest save [thy] wife? And surely the everlasting happiness of the person now the companion of your life, will be more than an equivalent for all the self-denial to which you may be required at present to submit. But if this should not be the effect, it still becomes you to do your duty; and therefore since the providence of God is concerned in all these relations, and in the steps by which they were contracted, as God hath distributed to every one, and, as it were, cast the parts of life, let every one so walk, even as the Lord hath called him.^d This is the*

16 For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

17 But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk: and so

the argument will by no means bear it; for it would be proving a thing by itself, *idem per idem*, to argue that the converse of the parents was lawful, because the children were not bastards; whereas all who thought the converse of the parents unlawful, must of course think that the children were illegitimate.

^d *As the Lord hath called him.*] This is a very pertinent digression, as it so directly contradicts the notion which prevailed among the Jews, that embracing the true religion dissolved all the relations which had before been contracted. Whereas the apostle here declares, that the gospel left them in this respect just

ordain I in all churches. lesson I would inculcate on you Corinthians, and thus I command in all the churches, and charge it upon the consciences of men, as a lesson of the highest importance. SECT. XIII.
1 Cor. vii. 17.

18 Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not become circumcised. *Is any one, for instance, called, being circum-* 18 *cised, let him not become, so far as in him lies, uncircumcised; ^e nor act as if he were desirous, as far as possible, to undo what was done by his Jewish parents or masters in his infancy. Is any one called to the fellowship of gospel-blessings in uncircumcision, let him not be solicitous to be circumcised, as if that rite were necessary to his salvation, as the Jews and some*

19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. zealots amongst ourselves have taught. For to 19 *speak the important truth in a few plain words, Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; the observation or non-observation of the Mosaic law, will neither secure nor obstruct our salvation; but all depends upon keeping the commandments of God. An obediential faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, produced by the sanctifying influences of his Spirit on the heart, and bringing forth the genuine fruits of holiness in our temper and life, is the great concern; and whether we be Jews or Gentiles, circumcised or uncircumcised, we shall be happy or miserable for ever as we are careful or negligent with regard to this. As for other matters, be* 20

20 Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. *not excessively concerned about them; but in whatever calling, that is, profession and circumstance, any one of you was called, in that let him continue; affect not to change without the clear and evident leadings of Providence, as there is generally greater reason to expect comfort and usefulness in such a calling than another. And* 21

21 Art thou called being a servant? care not for it; but if I may apply this not only to the different employments but relations in life, as well as diversity in religious professions. *Art thou, for instance, called into the church of Christ, [being] in the low rank, not only of an hired servant, but a slave? Do not so much regard it, as, upon that account, to make thy life uneasy:*

as it found them; increasing instead of lessening the obligations they were under to a faithful and affectionate discharge of their correspondent duties.

^e *Become uncircumcised.*] The word *ἐπισυνάγω* has an evident relation to *attempts*, like those referred to, 1 Mac. i. 15, which it is not necessary more particularly to illustrate.

SECT. *but if thou canst, without any sinful method of* thou mayest be made
 XIII. *obtaining it, be made free, choose it rather, as* free, use it rather.

1 Cor. *what is no doubt in itself eligible, yet not ab-*
 vii. 21. *solutely necessary to the happiness of a good*

22 *man. For he that is called by the Lord to the* 22 For he that is
Christian faith, [being] a servant or slave, is the called in the Lord,
Lord's freeman. Christ has made him free in- *being a servant, is*
deed, in making him partaker of the glorious the Lord's freeman:
liberties of the children of God, (John viii. 36;) likewise also he that
and on the other hand, he also that is called, [be- is called, *being free,*
ing] free from the authority of any human mas- is Christ's servant.

23 *ter, is still the servant, the property of Christ,*
and owes him a most implicit and universal obe-
dience. But upon this head remember, that as 23 Ye are bought
Christians you were all bought with a most in- with a price; be not
valuable price:† Christ hath redeemed you at the ye the servants of
expense of his own blood; and therefore let me men.
caution you, out of regard to him, and from a
desire to be capable of serving him as much as
possible, that ye do not, where it may by any
lawful means be avoided, become the slaves of
men; since so many evils, and dangers, and
snare, are inseparable from such a situation.

24 *This, brethren, is the particular advice which* 24 Brethren, let
I thought proper to give upon this head; and every man wherein
the general rule I laid down above is of such he is called, therein
great importance, that I must repeat it: in abide with God.
whatever [condition] a man was called at first
by the gospel and grace of Christ, in that let
him abide with God,‡ taking care to behave in
a prudent and religious manner, as under the

† *You were bought with a price, &c.] Dr.*
 Whitby would render it, "*Are ye bought*
with a price, that is, redeemed from
servitude? Become not servants of
men; do not sell yourselves for slaves
again." It is indeed probable that
 the apostle does counsel Christians
 against becoming slaves, if it could be
 prevented; and with great reason, as it
 was a circumstance which seemed less
 suitable to the dignity of the Christian
 profession, and must expose them to
 many incumbrances and interruptions
 in duty, especially on the Lord's day,
 and other seasons of religious assem-
 blies; besides the danger of being pre-
 sent at domestic idolatrous sacrifices,
 or being ill used if they refused their
 compliance. But I cannot thoroughly
 approve of the Doctor's version, because

the advice is unnecessarily restrained
 thereby to those slaves who had been
 redeemed; which plainly as well suited
 those who had their freedom given them,
 and indeed suited all Christians who
 never had been at all slaves, and who
 might more easily have been prevailed
 upon, by their poverty, to bring them-
 selves into a condition the evils and
 inconveniencies of which they did not
 thoroughly know.

‡ *Abide with God.] L'Enfant explains*
παρά τῷ Θεῷ, in the sight of God, (com-
 pare 2 Cor. xi. 11; Eph. v. 21,) and
 thinks there had been some disorders at
 Corinth, proceeding from some irregular
 claim which Christian slaves made to li-
 berty, under pretence that, as Christian
 brethren, they were equal with their
 masters.

Divine inspection; and not changing his business in life, if it be in general lawful, because he is a Christian; but endeavouring to pursue it with such integrity, diligence and prudence, as that his great Master and Saviour may be most effectually glorified.

SECT.
XIII.
1 Cor.
vii. 24.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us learn, from the exhortations and reasonings of the apostle, a becoming solicitude to contribute as much as we possibly can, to the Christian edification of each other; and especially let this be the care of the nearest relatives in life. What can be more desirable, than that the husband may be sanctified by the wife, and the wife by the husband! May all prudent care be taken, in contracting marriages, as to the religious character of the intended partner of life; and in those already contracted, where this precaution has been neglected, or where the judgment formed seems to have been mistaken, let all considerations of prudence, of religion, of affection, concur to animate to a mutual care of each other's soul, that most important effort of love, that most solid expression and demonstration of friendship. Nor let the improbability of success be pleaded in excuse for neglect, even where the attempt must be made by the subordinate sex. A possibility should be sufficient encouragement; and surely there is room to say, How knowest thou, O wife, but thou mayest save him whose salvation, next to thine own, must be most desirable to thee?

Let us all study the duties of the relations in which God hath fixed us; and walk with him in our proper callings, not desiring so much to exchange as to improve them. His wise providence hath distributed the part; it is our wisdom, and will be our happiness, to act in humble congruity to that distribution. Surely the apostle could not have expressed in stronger terms his deep conviction of the small importance of human distinctions, than he here does; when speaking of what seems to great and generous minds the most miserable lot, even that of a slave, he says, Care not for it.^h If liberty itself, the first of all temporal blessings, be not of so great importance, as that a man, blessed with the high hopes and glorious consolations of Christianity, should make himself very solicitous about it, how much less is there in those comparatively trifling distinctions on which many lay so disproportionate, so extravagant a stress!

Let Christian servants (for blessed be God, amongst us we have no slaves,) remember their high privileges, as the Lord's

^h Care not for it.] This fine remark (for such indeed it is,) occurs in Dr. Goodwin's Works, Vol. I. p. 50.

SECT. freemen. Let Christian masters remember the restraint, as the
 XIII. Lord's servants. And let the benefits of liberty, especially
 Ver. 22. when considered in its aspect upon religion, be so far valued, as
 not to be bartered away for any price which the enemies of
 mankind may offer in exchange.

But above all, let us remember the infinite importance of
 maintaining the freedom of the mind from the bondage of cor-
 ruption; and of keeping, with all humble and cheerful obser-
 19 vance, the commandments of God. While many express the
 warmest zeal for circumcision or uncircumcision, in defence of,
 or in opposition to, this or that mode or form of external wor-
 ship, let our hearts be set on what is most vital and essential in
 religion; and we shall find the happiest equivalent, in the com-
 posure and satisfaction of our own spirit now, as well as in those
 abundant rewards which the Lord hath laid up for them who
 fear him.

SECT. XIV.

*The Apostle treats on the inexpediency of marriage, in the circumstances of
 the church at that juncture; and inculcates a serious sense of the short-
 ness of time, as the best remedy against immoderate attachment to
 any secular interest. 1 Cor. vii. 25, to the end.*

1 CORINTHIANS VII. 25.

SECT.
 XIV.

1 Cor.
 vii. 25.

BUT I have been insensibly led by these ge-
 neral views of our obligations and hopes as
 Christians, to digress from the subject of mar-
 riage, which I had first in view, and to which
 it is time I should return. And here, *concern-*
ing the case of virgins of either sex, I have re-
ceived no express commandment from the Lord,
as I had in the case handled above; whether by
what is transmitted to us in Christ's discourses,
or by any immediate and personal revelation;^a
nevertheless I give my opinion as one who hath
received grace and mercy of the Lord, to be faith-
ful in the great charge he hath committed to
me; and therefore, considering the many in-
stances in which I have been enabled to ap-
prove my fidelity to Christ and his church, may

1 COR. VII. 25.

NOW concerning
 virgins, I have
 no commandment of
 the Lord: yet I give
 my judgement as one
 that hath obtained
 mercy of the Lord to
 be faithful.

^a Or by immediate and personal reve-
 lation.] To this I think he refers, ra-
 ther than the former, as he speaks in the

singular number; whereas else he might
 more properly have said, we have receiv-
 ed none.

26 I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress. I say that it is good for a man so to be.

27 Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

28 But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless, such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.

29 But this I say, brethren, the time is short. It remaineth, that both they that have wives, be as

expect to be heard with some peculiar regard. **SECT. XIV.**
I apprehend this therefore to be right and good in the present exigency^b and extremity of affairs, while the church is in such a state of persecution, that [it is] best for a single man to continue as he is. Art thou indeed bound to a wife already? my advice affects not thee; in that case bear patiently whatever burdens may occur, and seek not to be loosed from her by an irregular and scandalous divorce or separation. But on the other hand, art thou loosed from a wife? Hath Providence never led thee into those engagements, or has it broken the bond by the death of thy former companion? If thou canst conveniently and virtuously continue as thou art, seek not a wife at present, till the storm which now hovers over the church be a little blown over, and more peaceful times return. Yet if thou dost marry, thou hast not thereby sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: the marriage-state is no doubt both lawful and honourable; yet such will have probably some additional affliction in the flesh; they will be encumbered with the burden of many temporal affairs: and the representation which I make to you of these things, is not out of severity but tenderness; as I would fain spare you, and speak on the whole in this gentle and cautious manner on the subject, to avoid extremes either the one way or the other.

But this I say, brethren, with great confidence, and desire you would hear it with due attention, that the whole time of our abode in this world is contracted^c within very narrow limits; it remains, therefore, that we guard against too fond an attachment to any relation or possession in life: so that they who have wives, be

^b *Present exigency.*] This must certainly refer to the prevalence of persecution at that time; for nothing can be more absurd than to imagine, that an inspired apostle would, in the general, discountenance marriage; considering that it was expressly agreeable to a divine institution, and of great importance to the existence and happiness of all future generations.

^c *Contracted.*] The word συρραμμενόν properly imports this, being (as many

have observed,) a metaphor, taken from furling or gathering up a sail. Dr. Hammond, and some others, would render this, *it is but a little while, and they that have wives shall be as though they had none.* That is, “I see these times of persecution rising, which will put men out of a capacity of enjoying those temporal delights which they may now be fond of.” But this does not seem an exact translation, though L’Enfant mentions it with considerable regard.

1 Cor.
vii. 26.

SECT. in a manner as if they had none; And they though they had none:

XIV. that weep, as not weeping in streams of insoluble sorrow, though nature may be allowed to drop its moderate tear; and they that rejoice, as not rejoicing in dissolute and confident sallies of mirth, as if secure from any distressful revolution; and they that purchase, as not possessing by a certain tenure what they must shortly re-

1 Cor.
vii. 30.

31 sign; And they who use this world, as not carrying the enjoyments of it to an unbridled excess; for the whole scheme and fashion of this world passes off,^d and is gone like a scene in a theatre, that presently shifts; or a pageant in some public procession, which, how gaudily soever it may be adorned to strike the eyes of spectators, is still in motion, and presently disappears, to show itself for a few moments to others. So transitory are all our enjoyments and afflictions too, and worthy of little regard, when compared with the solid realities which are soon to open upon us, and never to pass away.

30 And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not:

31 And they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away.

32 But I would have you without anxiety, while you continue here amidst all these uncertainties; and therefore it is I advise you in present circumstances to decline marriage, if you conveniently can. For an unmarried man careth for the things of the Lord Jesus Christ, how he may please the Lord, and is in a great degree at leisure to employ his thoughts, and schemes, and labours, for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom among men; and sure there is no other employment so honourable, so delightful, and, when remote consequences are taken into the

32 But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:

33 account, so profitable: Whereas he who is married, careth for the things of the world, how he may maintain his family, and how he may please [his] wife, and so accommodate himself to her

33 But he that is married, careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.

34 temper, as to make her easy and happy. On the other hand, there is just such a difference between the condition of a wife and a virgin.^e

34 There is difference also between a wife and a virgin:

^d Fashion of this world passes off.] *ἡ φάσις τοῦ κόσμου παρέρχεται.* Compare 1 John ii. 17.

^e There is just such a difference, &c.] Some would connect the word *μεμψίζουσι* with the close of the preceding verse, and render it, "He that is married, cares, &c.

"how he may please his wife, and is divided in his thoughts, or distracted with a variety of anxieties." But this would occasion an unnecessary ellipsis in the beginning of this verse, and destroy the resemblance between the conclusion of the

the unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

She who is unmarried is careful about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. She has leisure to attend to the higher improvement of religion in her soul, by the more abundant exercises of devotion, as well as to do something more for the advancement of religion among others; *whereas she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please [her] husband;*^f and the diversity of humours both in men and women, and the imperfection of even the best tempers, make this sometimes on both sides a difficult task; on which account single persons have always some considerable advantages, which are especially apparent in these times of public danger.

SECT.
XIV.
1 Cor.
vii. 34.

35 And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

But all this I say for your own benefit, with a sincere desire to promote your happiness; and not that I may throw a snare upon you,^g and bind you from that which God for wise reasons instituted and allows, and which the state of human nature generally requires; *but out of regard to what is to be sure very comely*^h *and decent in the Lord, without any violent constraint,*ⁱ by which I might seem to drag you into a state of life which should make you continually uneasy: for that would quite spoil its gracefulness as well as acceptance, and might plunge you into much greater inconveniences another way.

36 But if any man *But, on the other hand, if any on mature de-* 36

two verses, when it is evident the apostle meant to say the same of both the husband and wife.

[*How she may please her husband.*] The apostle in this text and the counterpart to it, seems to declare that single persons of either sex have generally opportunities for devotion beyond those that are married, even in the most peaceful times of the church; and that a diversity of humours, both in men and women, makes it difficult for them to please each other so thoroughly as is necessary, in order to make a married life delightful. So that it intimates a counsel to single people to value and improve their advantages, and to married people to watch against those things that would ensnare them, and injure their mutual peace and comfort.

^f *Not that I may throw a snare upon you.*] This is the most literal version I could give of βροχον ὑμιν επιβάλω. Mr. Locke thinks the word βροχον, which signifies cord, alludes to the Jewish phrase of binding what was declared unlawful.

^h *Comely: ευσχημον.*] This seems to intimate that they were now in a circumstance in which God did, as it were, exact a peculiar severity from all their thoughts; and that it was a time to think of the trials of martyrdom rather than the endearment of human passions.

ⁱ *Without any violent constraint.*] Απεγισπαγωγς is rendered in our translation by the addition of several words, *that ye may attend on the Lord without distraction.* But Sir Norton Knatchbull has convinced me that the version here given is much preferable to ours.

SECT. liberation apprehend that he acts an unbecoming
 XIV. part towards his virgin daughter, or any other
 maiden that may fall under his guardianship
 and care, if she pass the flower of [her] age^k in a
 single state, which I know is an opinion very
 prevalent among the Jews; and if he think
 that it ought to be so, let him do what he will in
 this respect; he sinneth not in his intent of let-
 ting her change her present condition; and there-
 fore let him seek out a proper partner in life for

1 Cor.
 vii. 36.

37 her, and let them marry. But he that hath
 hitherto stood stedfast in his heart, having also
 on her side no apprehension of any necessity, in
 consequence of what he discerns of her disposi-
 tions, and no engagement subsisting which might
 give another a just claim to her, but hath power
 over his own will, being at liberty to act as he
 pleases: and hath in such circumstances deter-
 mined in his own heart that he will keep his
 maiden still single, he does well, and the part
 he acts is so far from being blamable, that in
 present circumstances it is much to be com-
 38 mended. So that on the whole, the conclusion
 of the matter is this; he that in such troublous

think that he behav-
 eth himself uncome-
 ly toward his virgin,
 if she pass the flower
 of her age, and need
 so require, let him
 do what he will, he
 sinneth not: let them
 marry.

37 Nevertheless,
 he that standeth sted-
 fast in his heart, hav-
 ing no necessity, but
 hath power over his
 own will, and hath
 so decreed in his
 heart that he will
 keep his virgin, do-
 eth well.

38 So then, he

^k Pass the flower of her age, &c.] There
 is hardly any passage in the epistle
 about the sense of which I have been
 more perplexed than about this; and I
 am still far from being satisfied concern-
 ing it. I had once translated it, "If
 any one thinks that he acts an unbecom-
 ing part by continuing in his single state
 till he be past the flower of his age,—let
 them marry,—he that marries does well,"
 &c. and had paraphrased the words ac-
 cordingly. And what induced me to this
 was, that verse 37 the apostle puts the
 issue of the matter on the stedfastness
 of his own mind, the power he had over
 his own will, and his having no neces-
 sity; whereas if a daughter or a ward
 were in question, her inclinations, tem-
 per, and conveniency were certainly to
 be consulted; and it would be the same
 if the virgin spoken of was one to whom
 the man was himself engaged. But it
 is really doing such violence to the ori-
 ginal to render τηρεν την εαυτου παρθενον,
 keep himself single, or keep his own virgi-
 nity; and to render εγκαμιζων, he that
 marries, that after long deliberation I
 chose to abide by our own version, espe-

cially since it agrees with most of those
 I have had an opportunity of consulting.
 And if this be admitted, I think it must
 be taken for granted that when the apos-
 tle speaks of this man's having no ne-
 cessity, he means to take in whatever
 might urge him to dispose of her in mar-
 riage, whether in her temper and incli-
 nations, or in their domestic circum-
 stances.—As for Heinsius's opinion, that
 "ασχημονειν επι την παρθενον signifies to
 incur shame by reason of his virgin;"
 meaning if a man apprehend that his
 daughter will dishonour his family by
 fornication, he will do prudently to
 marry her: I think the above objection
 lies equally against the interpretation.
 But if the Alexandrine reading of γαμι-
 ζων, instead of εγκαμιζων, be admitted,
 it may deserve consideration whether
 the whole passage may not refer to the
 case of a contract between a man and a
 young maiden, the accomplishment or
 dissolution of which might in some
 imaginable circumstances depend very
 much on the conduct of the man, as he
 seemed to urge or decline the bringing
 it into effect.

that giveth *her* in marriage, doeth well: but he that giveth *her* not in marriage, doeth better.

times as these gives [*her*] in marriage, doth well; she may find opportunities in that relation both to adorn and to serve Christianity; but as things are circumstanced, I must needs declare, that where a man is under no necessity of doing it, *he that gives [her] not in marriage, doeth better*; and more effectually consults both his comfort and safety.

SECT.
XIV.

1 Cor.
vii. 38.

39 The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth: but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

This however is beyond controversy certain, 39 that *the wife is bound by the law* to continue with her husband, and submit herself to him, *as long as her husband liveth: but if her husband be dead, she is in that case free, and may marry to whom she will*; only, let her take care that she marry *in the Lord*, and that retaining a sense of the importance of her Christian obligations, she does not choose a partner for life of a different religion from herself. She may, I 40 say, lawfully act thus; but I would not be understood to advise it; for *she is happier, according to my sentiment, if she continue as she is: and I may modestly say, that I appear to have the Spirit of God¹ to guide me*, and not merely some degree of experience, arising from the many observations which for a course of years I have made on human affairs. I may therefore reasonably suppose my judgment will have its peculiar weight, even where I do not pretend to decide with such an authority as should bind the conscience as by an apostolical dictate.

40 But she is happier, if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also, that I have the Spirit of God.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us observe the humility of the excellent apostle with Ver. 25. pleasure. When he speaks of his fidelity in the ministry, he tells us he obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. Edified by such an example, let us ascribe to Christ the praise, not only of our endowments, but our virtues; even to him who worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

Let us seriously contemplate the affecting lesson which the 29 apostle here gives of the shortness of time; and infer how much

¹ *I appear to have the Spirit of God.*] It is very unreasonable for any to infer from hence, that St. Paul was uncertain whether he was inspired or not. Whereas this is only a modest way of speaking; and $\epsilon\chi\omega$ $\epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\nu$ often signifies the same

with $\epsilon\chi\omega$. Compare Luke viii. 18. with Mat. xiii. 12; 1 Cor. x. 1, 2; chap. xiv. 37. And the ambiguity in the expression *appear to have*, seems exactly to correspond to the ambiguity of this original phrase.

SECT. it is our wisdom to loosen our affections from the things of this
 XIV. vain world, which are ready to ingross so disproportionate a
 share in them. Let us look upon the world as a transient pa-

Ver. 30

31 We expect, instead of these transitory vanities and empty shows,
 a kingdom that cannot be moved; in the expectation of which
 32 let us be solicitous to please the Lord; making the best of our
 opportunities, and guarding against all that may unnecessarily
 divert our minds, and divide our cares, from what will at length
 appear the one thing needful.

Let us attentively reflect upon the advantages and snares of
 our respective conditions in life; that we may improve the one,
 and escape, as far as possible, all injury from the other. Let
 those who are single employ their leisure for God; and endea-
 vour to collect a stock of Christian experience which may sup-
 port them when the duties and difficulties, the cares and sor-
 33, 34 rows of life, may be multiplied. Let those who are married,
 with mutual tender regard, endeavour to please each other, and
 make the relation into which Providence hath conducted them,
 as comfortable and agreeable as they can. And whatever cares
 press upon their minds, or demand their attention, let them or-
 der their affairs with such discretion, that they may still secure
 a due proportion of their time for the things of the Lord.

35—38 If any in their consciences are persuaded that by continuing
 single they shall best answer the purposes of religion, and pro-
 mote the good of their fellow-creatures in conjunction with
 their own; let them do it. As for those that marry, whether
 39 a first or a second time, let them do it in the Lord; acting in
 the choice of their most intimate friend and companion as the
 servants of Christ; who are desirous that their conduct may be
 approved by him, and that any avocations and interruptions in
 his service which may be occasioned, even in those peaceful
 times, by marriage, may be, in some measure, balanced, by
 the united prayers, prudent counsels, and edifying converse of
 those with whom they unite in this tender and indissoluble
 bond.

SECT. XV.

The Apostle proceeds to consider the case of eating things sacrificed to idols; and reminds them, that though all Christians might well be supposed to know the vanity of those imaginary deities to which they were offered, yet it might prove an occasion of grief and scandal, that the professors of Christianity should partake of these sacrifices in their temple; which therefore charity would require them by all means to avoid. 1 Cor. viii. throughout.

1 COR. VIII. 1.

NOW as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

1 CORINTHIANS VIII. 1.

I NOW proceed to consider the other cases about which you consulted me; particularly that concerning things sacrificed to idols: and here it may be observed, that we know we all have, as Christians, that general knowledge of the vanity of these fictitious deities of which some are ready to boast, as if it were an extraordinary matter, and which they sometimes are in danger of abusing, by making it the foundation of liberties which may be very detrimental. But let it be remembered that knowledge often puffeth up,^a and is the occasion of great self-conceit and arrogance: whereas it is considerate love, and gentle tenderness, that edifies and has such a happy effect in building up the church of Christ. And indeed, if any one think that he knoweth any thing, if he be conceited of his knowledge, so as to neglect and despise his brethren, and, upon account of his supposed superiority in that respect, set a very high value upon himself, it appears that he as yet knows nothing as he ought to know it, and needs to be taught the very first and most essential principles of that knowledge which is truly ornamental and useful. But if any man love God, and show it by a steady regard for the Divine glory and the good of his brethren, he is indeed known of him;^b this man hath attained the true knowledge of God, and will be sure of his approbation and favour. Therefore, to proceed to the question in debate, concerning the eating of the

SECT. XV.

1 Cor. viii. 1.

2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

4 As concerning therefore the eating

^a Knowledge puffeth up.] Elsner (Observ. Vol. II. p. 96,) acknowledges that, as Bos, and Erasmus Schmidius, contend, there is a parenthesis here; but he thinks it begins in the middle of the first verse, and ends after the first clause of the 4th, we have all knowledge—we know that an idol is nothing, &c.

^b He is known of him.] Most under-

stand it, he is approved by God; as to know, sometimes undoubtedly signifies. Mr. Locke would render it, he is instructed by him. But I acquiesce in Mr. Pierce's reasoning in his 6th Dissertation, to prove the construction followed in the paraphrase, by a construction like that of the original of Acts x. 36, where *ἐκ* plainly refers to the immediate antecedent.

SECT. *things sacrificed to idols, we well know that an*
 XV. *idol [is] in itself nothing in the world,^c but a*
 1 Cor. mass of senseless matter, and, when regarded in
 viii. 4. a religious view, so empty a vanity, that it de-
 serves not to be named among the things that
 exist. *And we all know that [there is] indeed*
no other God, but that one glorious and tran-
scendent Being, to which the gospel hath taught

5 *us to appropriate our worship. For though there*
are many which are called gods, whether residing
in heaven or on earth, or even under the earth ;
for the heathens have not only their celestial
and terrestrial, but likewise their infernal deities:
as there are many gods, and many lords, who are
in their various subordinations adored by the
Gentiles, and have great though very absurd
 6 *worship paid to them : Nevertheless, to us [there*
is but] one God, the Father^d of angels and men,
from whom [are] all things in created nature ;
and we derived our being from him, were made
for him, and for his glory : and there is also but
one Lord, even Jesus Christ, the only Mediator
between God and man, by whom [are] all things
created, supported, and guided ; and we by him,
thankfully owning ourselves obliged to his agen-
cy and care for all we are and have, or hope to
obtain. These are grand principles, in which
all intelligent Christians are agreed ; and it
would be happy, if they kept them steadily and
consistently in view.

7 *You are possessed of these apprehensions of*
things ; it is well : But you ought to remem-
ber, that [there is] not in all men this knowledge.
Some Christian converts may not sufficiently
apprehend this ; but may imagine there is really
some invisible spirit present in the idol, and act-
ing by and upon it. And in consequence of
this, some do, even until now, with consciousness
of some religious regard to the idol, eat the

of those things that
 are offered in sacri-
 fice unto idols, we
 know that an idol is
 nothing in the world,
 and that *there is* none
 other God but one.

5 For though there
 be that are called
 gods, whether in hea-
 ven or in earth, (as
 there be gods many,
 and lords many :)

6 But to us *there is*
but one God, the Fa-
ther, of whom are all
things, and we in
him : and one Lord
Jesus Christ, by whom
are all things, and we
by him.

7 Howbeit *there is*
not in every man
that knowledge : for
some, with con-
science of the idol
unto this hour, eat it

^c *We know that an idol is nothing in the world.] Dr. Whitby shows this was a common aphorism among the Jewish doctors, to which the word פלילי, the name given them, did probably allude. Mons. Saurin thinks it so hard to reconcile this with what the apostle says elsewhere, that he judges it necessary to understand this as an objection made by one of the Corinthians, with whom he is disputing. Saur. Disc. Vol. II. p. 476—481. But I cannot, from an impartial view of the context, give into this interpretation.*

See Elsner's learned note here on εἰδωλον and simulachrum.

^d *One God, the Father.] In answer to the argument drawn from hence against the Deity of Christ, see Dr. Guyse on this place; and Dr. Edm. Calamy's Sermon on the Trinity, p. 25 and 244. The Person to whom the Son, as Lord or Mediator, introduces us, is undoubtedly the Father; nor is the Son to be considered as another God. But it is not the design of these notes largely to discuss theological controversies.*

as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak, is defiled.

things in question, as what is sacrificed to the idol, intending thereby to pay some homage; and so their conscience being too weak to withstand a temptation to what, in these circumstances, is really evil, is defiled, and brought under a grievous and terrifying load of guilt.

SECT.

XV.

1 Cor.
viii. 7.

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse.

But why should we occasion this inconvenience? For we know that meat commends us not, in any degree, to the acceptance and favour of God; for neither are we the better, if we eat, nor the worse, if we eat not. The great God does not so much esteem a man for being, or disapprove him for not being, superior to such little scruples; but the tenderness of his conscience, together with the zeal and charity of his heart, are the grand qualities he regards.

9 But take heed, lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak.

But take heed lest this power and liberty of yours be by any means a stumbling-block and occasion of sin to the weak with whom you converse, or who observe your conduct perhaps with more regard than you pay to it yourselves.

10 For if any man see thee, which hast knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols?

For if any one see thee, who hast this boasted knowledge, sitting down to an entertainment in an idol's temple^e as freely as thou wouldst in thine own house, and partaking of his sacrifices as cheerfully as if they were the common provisions of thine own table; though this may indeed arise from that sovereign contempt in which thou holdest that idle fiction of deity, can he know that situation of thy mind? And will not the conscience of him that is thus weak, and who perhaps feels some scruples in his own mind about it, be encouraged by thy example to eat of the idol-sacrifice with some sentiments of superstitious regard? And so shall the weak brother, for whom the Lord Jesus Christ himself died, be liable to perish by thy knowledge, in this instance mischievous rather than useful, so that when thou makest a vain ostentation of it, thou

10

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

And so shall the weak brother, for whom the Lord Jesus Christ himself died, be liable to perish by thy knowledge, in this instance mischievous rather than useful, so that when thou makest a vain ostentation of it, thou

11

^e Sitting down to an entertainment in an idol's temple.] How commonly entertainments among the heathen consisted of what had been sacrificed to their fictitious deities, and how religiously the Christians abstained from them even when most rigorously imposed, Elsner has shown by many very

apposite citations, (Observ. Vol. II. p. 96); and no doubt the apostle's decision here had great weight with them. That these feasts were often celebrated in their temples, the same learned critic has abundantly shown in his notes on this clause; and it is strange that Chemnitius and Erasmus should ever have doubted it.

SECT. dost in effect pride thyself in thy brother's ruin.

xv. Imagine not this to be an inconsiderable evil;
 — but on the contrary rather know, that *when you* 12 But when ye sin
 1 Cor. *thus sin against the brethren, and wound their* so against the brethren, and wound their
 viii. 12. *weak consciences, leading them into guilt and* weak conscience, ye
hazarding their salvation, you greatly sin sin against Christ.
against Christ; who had such a tenderness for
souls that he died to redeem them, and hath
done all that example or precept can do to
make his followers enter into such humane and
compassionate views.

13 Therefore it is a determined point with me, upon these principles, that *if meat of any kind scandalize my brother and lead him into sin, I would not only abstain now and then from this or that agreeable food, but would never, as long as I live,^f eat any sort of flesh.* I would subsist entirely on vegetables, *that I may not scandalize and ensnare my brother, if there be no other way of avoiding it.* Of such importance should I esteem the preservation of one endangered soul. And herein I wish that God may give you the like self-denial, both for your own sakes and for the peace and honour of the Christian church.

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 1. LET us learn from this short but excellent chapter, to estimate the true value of knowledge, and to see how worthless and dangerous it is, when, instead of discovering to us our own ignorance and weakness, it serves only to puff up the mind. Let us rather labour and pray for that love and charity which edifieth ourselves and others, taking heed that we do not demonstrate our ignorance by a high conceit of our attainments in knowledge; for nothing can more evidently show how small those attainments are, than not to know their limits, when these limits so soon meet us, on what side soever we attempt to make an excursion. "Give us, O Lord, that love to thee which is the best proof of our knowledge, and the surest way to its highest improvements!"

4, 5 Let us always remember the grand principle of the unity of God; and with the one God and Father of all, adore the one

^f *As long as I live: εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.*] We (which might simply have been rendered render it, *as long as the world stands.* But never,) to the sense here given. the sense plainly limits the expression

Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we exist; setting him in our estimation far above all the powers, dignities, and glories of created nature. SECT. XV.

Belonging to so Divine a Master, let us endeavour to learn the most generous principle of true religion. Let us not found our confidence on admitting and contending for, or despising and deriding, this or that particular observance, by which, as it may happen to be circumstanced, God is neither honoured nor dishonoured, pleased nor displeased. But let us ever maintain the tenderest concern for the edification and comfort of our brethren, and guard against whatever might either grieve or ensnare them. 9 Let us remember that Christ died for the weakest as well as the strongest; and let their relation to him, and his tender and compassionate regard for them, melt down our hearts, when seized with that cold insensibility, which, alas, is too ready to prevail amongst Christians! It is Christ we wound, in wounding our brethren; and in smiting them, we smite him. Ver. 8.

Let us then stay that rash hand which is so ready in mere wantonness to do mischief; and be willing to deny ourselves in any desire, for ever so long a time, rather than by our indulgence to dishonour God and injure others. This is the excellent lesson St. Paul often inculcates, of which he was an eminent and illustrious example. But O, how low are multitudes of Christians, multitudes of ministers, fallen, when they cannot deny themselves in what is unnecessary and even unlawful, where either interest or pleasure solicit the gratification! 13

SECT. XVI.

The Apostle, proposing to illustrate his condescension to the weak, by his waving to accept of a maintenance from the Corinthians, introduces what he had to say on that head with a short discourse on the right which, as a gospel minister, he really had, to be supported by those among whom he laboured; which he argues both from natural equity and scripture principle. 1 Cor. ix. 1—14.

1 CORINTHIANS IX. 1.

AM I not an apostle? SECT. XVI.

WHILE I thus speak of the concern I have to avoid what may prove an occasion of injury to weak brethren, it leads my thoughts to the part I have acted while I resided among you, in declining to take that maintenance from you, which I might very justly have expected and demanded. And here you must give me leave to express my surprise, as well as my con- 1 Cor. ix. 1.

SECT.

XVI.

1 Cor.

ix. 1.

cern, to hear, that so unkind and unnatural a construction has been put upon my generosity and tenderness, as if I had declined to accept your contributions, from a consciousness of not being entitled to them as well as my brethren. But can you really imagine that to be the case? *Am not I*, as truly as any man living, *an apostle* of Jesus Christ? *Am not I* as free in this instance as any other, and may I not, as justly as they, expect to be maintained by you, while I am serving your best interests? *Have not I*, though called so much later than my brethren, *seen Jesus Christ our Lord*,^a after his resurrection, so as to be able to testify the important fact on my own knowledge, as confidently as those that were earlier acquainted with him? And, to urge so plain a point no farther, *are not ye* Corinthians, particularly, *my work in the Lord*, and the evident token of his blessing on my apostolical labours? On this account, *if I am not an apostle to some others, yet I doubtless am so to you*, who of all people in the world can show the least excuse for questioning my mission: *for ye are indeed the seal of my apostleship in the Lord*; and the extraordinary success I have had among you, if others should doubt of my commission, might furnish out a proof of it also to them.

3 *This therefore is my apology to those who examine and censure me as to this part of my conduct. Does my waving the use of a privilege prove that I have it not? Have we not, both in natural equity and according to the Divine constitution, the same power as others in the same office, to eat and to drink, and to subsist ourselves at the expense of those among whom we labour? Yea, have we not power to lead about [with us] in our apostolical travels, (if we think it necessary,) a sister, whom we might take for a wife,*^b *as some of the other apostles*

am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not you my work in the Lord?

2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the zeal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

3 Mine answer to them that do examine me, is this:

4 Have we not power to eat and to drink?

5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles,

^a *Have not I seen the Lord?* &c.] That this was necessary in order to his being an apostle, that is, a witness of Christ's resurrection, has before been observed. See Vol. II. p. 594, note 2. Compare Acts xxii. 14, 15; chap. xxvi. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 8.

^b *A sister, a wife.*] The word *γυναίκα* has no force at all here, if it be rendered a woman: a sister must undoubtedly be a

woman: not to say how improbable it is that the apostle should have carried about with him, in these sacred peregrinations, a woman to whom he was not married. So that the answer which the Papists make to the argument often brought from these words, in favour of a married clergy, is absolutely inconclusive.

and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

9 For it is written

and the brethren of the Lord do, and Peter^c in particular; and to expect that she likewise, as well as ourselves, should be provided for by those to whom we have done such important services, as nothing of this kind can ever requite? Or can it be thought there is any thing singular in my case, or in that of my present companions, that it *should* rob me of the liberties others have, so that *I only and Barnabas*^d should *not have power to decline working* with our own hands for a maintenance while we are preaching the gospel? I might here insist, indeed, on the natural equity of the thing, that they who devote themselves to the service of the public should be supported by the public whom they serve. *Who*, for instance, *ever goes to war at his own charge?* The community furnishes out provision for those who guard it and fight its battles. And if the services of a soldier deserve that maintenance which, while engaged in the defence of their country, men cannot earn, how much more may it be expected by us, who daily hazard our lives as well as wear them out for men's everlasting happiness? *Who planteth a vineyard and doth not expect to eat of its fruit? Or who feedeth a flock and doth not think he hath a right to eat of the milk of the flock?* And if it be judged reasonable that men should have an equivalent for their labours about natural things, and the accommodations of the body, is it not more evidently so when the felicity of immortal souls is concerned?

But do *I speak these things merely as a man*, upon principles of human reason alone, *and doth not the Jewish law speak also the same?* For there is a passage in the sacred volume on which the like argument may be built, (I mean Deut.

^c *And Peter.*] This is an important clause, both as it declares in effect that St. Peter continued to live with his wife after he became an apostle, and also that St. Peter had no rights as an apostle, which were not common to St. Paul. A remark utterly subversive of Popery, if traced to its obvious consequences.

^d *I only, and Barnabas.*] From this expression one would indeed think that the Judaizing Christians, who were the

main cause of St. Paul's uneasiness in this respect, had a peculiar spleen against those two apostles of the uncircumcision, who were so instrumental in procuring and publishing the Jerusalem decree, which determined the controversy so directly in favour of the believing Gentiles.—It seems probable from the 12th verse that Barnabas supported himself by the labour of his hands when at Corinth, as well as St. Paul.

SECT.

XVIJ

1 Cor.
ix. 5.

SECT. XXV. 4.) where it is written, even in the law of in the law of Moses,
 XVI. Moses itself, for which some have so distinguish- Thou shalt not muz-
 ——— ing a regard, “*Thou shalt not muzzle the ox* zle the mouth of the
 1 Cor. “*that treadeth out the corn,*”^e but shalt allow ox that treadeth out
 ix. 9. the poor animal to feed while it is labouring the corn. Doth God
 take care for oxen?

ful. Now is God so solicitous about oxen, that he intended this precept merely for their relief? Or doth he say [this] with a farther view, and, on the whole,^f for our sakes? Surely we may conclude he intended such precepts as these, relating to compassion to the brutes, in some measure at least for our sakes, to humanize the heart with generous and compassionate sentiments, and to make men much more tender to each other, where their various interests are concerned. I may therefore apply it to the case before us, as entirely comprehended in his extensive universal views; and say for us indeed was [it] written, that the necessary offices of life might be more cheerfully performed, in the expectation of such due acknowledgments; that he who plougheth might plough in hope of success, and that he who thresheth in such hope should not be disappointed, but should in proper time partake of his hope, and possess the good for which he has laboured. And surely amidst his care for others who are in meaner offices of life, God could not intend that the ministers of the gospel alone should be sunk under continual discouragement, neglect, and ill-usage.

11 And indeed when we consider what great benefactors these persons are to the souls amongst whom they labour with success, the reasonableness of the conclusion will appear beyond all contradiction. For if we, by our incessant diligence in preaching to you the gospel of the blessed God, have sown unto you spiritual things,

10. Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? for our sakes, no doubt, this is written: That he that ploweth, should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope, should be partaker of his hope.

11 If we have sown unto you spiri-

^e That treadeth out the corn.] It is well known that this was the custom in Judea and other eastern nations. It is still retained by many of them, and particularly in Ceylon. Raphelius has produced passages from Xenophon which something illustrate it.

^f On the whole.] It cannot be thought that God had no regard at all to the brute creatures in such precepts as these; and therefore I thought it better to render *πᾶσι* on the whole, than entirely or altogether, though that sense is more frequent.

tual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

12 If others be partakers of *this* power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless, we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

13 Do ye not know, that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar?

14 Even so hath

which may spring up in a harvest of eternal blessings, [is it] any great matter that we should reap your carnal things? Is there the least proportion between any thing which your liberality can impart to us, and that which we have been the happy instruments of imparting to you?

This is the privilege of ministers in general, 12 and it is a privilege which you well know some of them have exerted. And if others are so readily allowed to partake of [this] power over you,^g [shall] not we rather claim it, with yet more evident and apparent reason, who have been the means, not only of edifying and instructing you, but likewise of calling you into the profession of Christianity? But we have not made use of this power, though founded in such evident and various principles of equity. But we rather choose to endure all things, the fatigues of labour and inconveniences of frequent necessity, that we may not occasion any hindrance to the gospel of Christ,^h from the cavils of ill-disposed people, who are always watchful for opportunities to misrepresent and censure our conduct.

But though I do not now ask any thing of 13 this kind for myself, yet I will not give up the justice of the demand. And I might farther support it, from the provision which God made for the priests and Levites under the Mosaic law. Know ye not therefore, that they who are employed about holy things are fed out of the provisions which belong to the temple, and [that] they who wait upon the service of the altar are partakers with the altar, in a part of the victims offered on it, particularly the vows and the sacrifices of peace-offerings: And it is 14 farther to be considered, that so also, that is, on

^g Partake of [this] power, &c.] Mr. Pyle thinks this refers to the other apostles of Christ; but I rather think St. Paul intended to glance on the false teachers who carried their claims of this right to such an exorbitant height, though their services had been by no means comparable to those of the apostle. Compare 2 Cor. xi. 20.—Mr. Locke would here read *ὑμῶν ὑμῶν*, of your substance; but Mat. x. 1; John xvii. 2, and many other places,

prove that *ἐξ ὑμῶν ὑμῶν* may probably be rendered power over you.

^h Hindrance to the gospel.] From the conduct of the other apostles, and of St. Paul at other places, particularly among the Macedonian churches, we may conclude, that he might see some circumstances at Corinth, (not necessary for us exactly to know,) which determined him to decline accepting of any subsistence from them while he resided there.

SECT.

XVI.

1 Cor.
ix. 11.

SECT. principles like these, *the Lord Jesus Christ him-* the Lord ordained,
 XVI. self *hath* expressly commanded and *ordained*, that they which
 ———— *that they who preach the gospel should live and* preach the gospel
 1 Cor. *sub*sist upon the gospel;ⁱ when he declares, as gospel.
 ix, 14. you know more than one of the evangelists as-
 sures us he did, “ that the labourer is worthy
 of his hire.” Compare Mat. x. 10; Luke x. 7.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. MAY the disciples of Christ learn from these instructions, to
 1—7. honour the Lord with their substance, and the first-fruits of all
 their increase! And may they feel those happy effects attend-
 ing the ministration of the gospel, and reap such an abundant
 11 harvest of spiritual blessings, that the imparting temporal sub-
 sistence and accommodation to those who are the instruments
 of conveying them, may not be matter of constraint, but of
 free and affectionate choice! May the ministers of Christ, while
 they thankfully accept of that subsistence which Providence,
 by the instrumentality of their brethren, sends them, ever act a
 moderate and generous part, and maintain such a visible supe-
 riority to all secular views, as may do an honour to the gospel,
 and command veneration to themselves!

May the secular advantages of the office never invite bad
 men into it, nor its discouragements deter good men from un-
 dertaking it. And whatever censures the malignant world,
 who themselves know not any higher motive than self-interest,
 shall pass, may the ministers of Jesus ever have a testimony in
 their consciences, that they seek not the properties but the
 souls of their hearers!

8—10 Let us attend to the humane genius of the Mosaic law, mani-
 fested in the precepts which relate even to the brutes. And re-
 member, that it is the character, and should be the care of a
 merciful man, to extend mercy to his beast. Much more then
 let us show compassion to our fellow-men. Let us not desire
 to enjoy the benefit of their labours, even in the lowest em-
 ployments of life, without giving them some valuable equivalent.
 Let us bear towards all, the hearts of equitable and generous
 brethren, and constantly wish the prosperity and happiness of
 the human family. On the whole, may there be between the

ⁱ *Live upon the gospel.* Mr. Mede un-
 derstands *εὐαγγελίου* here, of the reward
 given for bringing a good message, (see
 Diatrib. in loc.) and shows that the word
 sometimes has that meaning in heathen
 authors: but it is a very uncommon sig-
 nification in the sacred, and therefore not

to be admitted without farther proof.—
 That man might be said to *live on the gos-
 pel*, who was maintained for preaching it;
 as he might be said to *live on the temple*,
 who was to be supported out of its in-
 come for ministering there, though the
 word temple has the usual signification.

teachers, and those who are taught by them, a continued intercourse of benevolent affections and friendly actions; as becomes those who stand in such an endearing relation to each other, and have, as Christians, the honour of being intimately related to that blessed Redeemer, who sought not his own things, but ours, and hath thereby laid the strongest engagement upon us, if we have any spark of gratitude and honour, not to seek our own things, but his!

SECT. XVII.

The Apostle illustrates the condescension and tenderness of his conduct towards the Corinthians, in declining to accept of their contributions; and speaks of his self-denial under a very expressive simile, taken from those who contended in those Grecian games with which they were familiarly acquainted. 1 Cor. ix. 15, to the end.

1 COR. IX. 15.

BUT I have used none of these things. Neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.

16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel!

1 CORINTHIANS IX. 15.

I HAVE thought it my duty, in the foregoing discourse, to plead the natural and the evangelical rights which the ministers of the gospel have to be maintained by the people, to whose spiritual edification they give their time and labours. *But you well know that I myself, during my abode among you, have used none of these things; nor have I written thus, that if, according to my purpose and hope, I ever should visit you again, it should hereafter be so done unto me. I think of the generous and self-denying part which I have acted among you, in declining, for some particular reasons, to take a maintenance, with a pleasure so great, that I may even say, [it were] better for me to die for want of the necessary supplies of life, than that any man among you should make this my boasting void, by having it to say, that I have eaten his bread, and been supported at his expense. For if I preach the gospel, after what hath hap-*

SECT.
XVII.

1 Cor.
ix. 15.

pended in my singular case, I have no [matter of] boasting in that; for having received such a commission, how could I refuse? I may say, a kind of invincible necessity lieth upon me, and woe to me indeed, if I preach not the gospel! To decline a work assigned to me by so condescending an appearance of Christ, when with

SECT. malicious rage I was attempting to destroy his
 XVII. church, would be an instance of ingratitude and
 obstinacy, deserving the most dreadful and insupportable condemnation. *If indeed I do this voluntarily, and show upon every occasion a cordial willingness to do it, I have indeed some room to expect a reward; but if I do it unwillingly, as I said before, a dispensation is entrusted to me, and I must of necessity fulfil it.*

1 Cor.
 ix. 17.

17 For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.

18 *What then is that circumstance in my conduct, for which I may expect a reward of praise from the mouth of my Divine Master? Surely this, that when I preach the gospel of Christ, I may render it unexpensive; that so I may be sure not in the least degree to abuse my power in the gospel to any low and secular purposes, or carry it beyond its due bounds. For in this respect, being free from all men, and under no obligation, in this manner, to give them my labours, I made myself the servant of all,^a addicting myself to the most fatiguing duties, that I might advance their happiness, and gain the more to true religion and salvation; in which I have found a noble equivalent for all I could do, or bear. And I not only submitted to preach the gospel without any reward, but I made it a constant maxim, to accommodate my manner of living to the way and relish of those about me, sacrificing my own humour and inclination; and that, in some instances, when I could not do it without considerable inconvenience to myself: accordingly, to the Jews I became as a Jew,^b that I might gain over more of the Jews to Christianity: to those, I say, who were, or apprehended themselves to be, under the tedious ceremonies and disagreeable restraints of the Mosaic law, I became, as if I were still in conscience under the obligations of the law,^c*

18 What is my reward then? verily that when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law.

^a *The servant of all.*] This has a stronger sense than can easily be expressed in the paraphrase; and intimates, that he acted with as self-denying a regard to their interests, and as much caution not to offend them, as if he were absolutely in their power, as a slave is in that of his master.

^b *To the Jews, &c.*] Compare, for the illustration of this, Acts xvi. 3, chap. xxi.

21, &c. which instances were undoubtedly a specimen of many more of the like kind.

^c *As if I were still under the obligations of the law.*] This can only signify that he voluntarily complied with it, as an indifferent thing; but it cannot by any means imply that he declared such observance necessary, or refused to converse with any who would not conform to

21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

though I knew it to have been abolished ; and this that I might gain those who apprehended themselves to be under the bond of that law. On the other hand, to those who were without the law of Moses, and either unacquainted with it, or apprehended themselves under no obligation to conform to its peculiar institutions, I behaved as if I had myself also been without the law, neglecting its ceremonial precepts, which I well knew to be superseded and abolished. [Yet] still taking care that it might appear both from my word and actions that I was not without law to God, but apprehended myself under a law of the most affectionate duty and gratitude to Christ, who came by new bonds to engage us to the strictest obedience. But these freedoms I used, and this moderation I manifested, not by any means for my own indulgence, but that I might gain those who are without the law,^d and make my ministry more agreeable and useful to such as were educated among the Gentiles. I therefore became to the

SECT. XVII.
1 Cor. ix. 21.

22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

weak as if I had been as weak and scrupulous as they, in the various articles of food and dress which might come into question, that I might gain upon the weak; for the soul of the weakest appeared to me infinitely valuable; and I have the warrant of my great Master to esteem it more precious than all the treasures of the world. In a word, I became all things to all men; accommodating myself to them so far as with a safe conscience I could, that by any or all means, if possible, I might save some; and it is the daily grief of my soul, that after all these efforts the number is so small. And this I do for the sake

23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

of the gospel, to promote its success to the utmost of my ability, that I also may be a sharer in the generous pleasure arising from the communication of it.^e

23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

them; for this was the very dissimulation which, with so generous a freedom, he condemned in St. Peter, Gal. ii. 14, &c.

^d That I might gain those without the law.] This seems to imply, that the Gentiles not yet converted to Christianity are here referred to; unless gaining the person spoken of signifies, rendering them "better disposed to regard his

"decisions," which is at most but a subordinate sense.

^e A sharer in the communication of it] We render it, that I might be partaker with you; but as the words with you, are not in the original, which is *ἵνα κοινωνῶμαι αὐτῷ γερῶμαι*, I rather understand the words as referring to the satisfaction he found in imparting the invaluable and

SECT.

XVII.

1 Cor.

ix. 24.

I may illustrate this by referring to the games so well known in Greece, and particularly to the Isthmian, so often celebrated among you at Corinth. *Do you not know, that with respect to those who run in the stadium or foot-race,^f all indeed run and contend with each other, whereas but one receiveth the prize?^g* Yet the uncertain hope that each may be that one, animates them all to strain every nerve in the course. You have much greater encouragement to exert yourselves in the pursuit of celestial blessings. See to it therefore, that ye *so run as that ye may obtain*, and that ye lay aside every thing that would be an incumbrance to you, or render you incapable of despatching the race with necessary vigour and alacrity.

25 *And every one who contendeth in the games, whether in running as above, or in wrestling or combating, is temperate in all things;^h* abstaining from whatever might enervate his strength, and submitting to a regular course of diet, exercise and hardship, that he may be the more capable of exerting himself with success. [*And this*] *they indeed [do,] that they may obtain a corruptible crown,ⁱ* a garland of leaves, that will soon

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things: Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown,

inexhaustible blessings of the gospel to all around him; a sentiment most suitable to his character and office.

^f *The stadium or foot-race.*] On comparing the translation I had before made of this passage with that of my learned and worthy friend Mr. West, (in his excellent Dissertation on the Olympic Games, p. 189, 190,) I had the pleasure to find a remarkable agreement; but where there was any difference, I have generally altered what I had written, either in the version or paraphrase, to make it conformable to his; whose judgment in any point of criticism has with me great weight, but especially on a subject of which he appears to have been so eminent a master, that his writings upon it are as distinguished in their kind as the games he so elegantly describes were in theirs.

^g *One receiveth the prize.*] It is true that in some games there were several prizes of different value; yet in those to which he here refers there was but one for the victor, and the argument is very strong and striking.

^h *Temperate in all things.*] Whoever

considers, on the one hand, to what great self-denial in articles of food, sleep, and every other sensual indulgence, they who were to contend in their games were obliged; and, on the other, of how great importance it is that the youth of a community should be formed to a manly taste and resolute self-government, will undoubtedly see the great national prudence of the Greeks in the institution and support of these games; to which, it is very probable, their remarkable valour and success in war, during the best days of their several republics, might in some considerable degree be owing. See, for the illustration of the temperance here referred to, Elsner's excellent note on this text, and Ælian. Var. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 30. lib. x. cap. 2.

ⁱ *Corruptible crown*, a garland of leaves, &c.] It is well known that the crown in the Olympic games, sacred to Jupiter, was of wild olive; in the Pythian, sacred to Apollo, of laurel; in the Isthmian or Corinthian, solemnized in honour of Palemon, of pine-tree; and in the Nemean, of smallage or parsley. Now the most of these were evergreens; yet they

but we an incorruptible.

with and perish: *but we* are animated by the view of *an incorruptible* crown, the duration and glory of which will be commensurate to the existence of our immortal souls.

SECT.
XVII.
1 Cor.
ix. 25.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

It is no small pleasure to me, while I am²⁶ exhorting you to this, to reflect that I am, through Divine grace, myself an example of the temperance I recommend. *I for my part run not as one who is to pass undistinguished;*^k but knowing what eyes are upon me, and solicitous to gain the approbation of my Judge, and attending with diligence and care to the boundaries which are marked out to us, I exert myself to the utmost. *I so fight, not as one that beats the air,*^l who fights as it were with his own shadow, or practises a feigned combat; but as one who has a real and living enemy to contend with, and who knowing that his life and his all is in question, would strike sure, and not lose his blows upon empty air. Thus I allow²⁷ not myself in a habit of indolence and luxury, *but* imitate on a much nobler occasion, and to a much greater degree, the self-denial of the combatants I mentioned above; *I bruise and mortify my body,*^m *and bring it into* such a degree of *servitude* as the superior interests of my soul require. And this I judge a most ne-

would grow dry, and break to pieces. Elsner (Observ. Vol. II. p. 103,) produces many passages in which the contenders in these exercises are rallied by the Grecian wits, for the extraordinary pains they took for such trifling rewards; and Plato has a celebrated passage, which greatly resembles this of St. Paul; but by no means equals it in beauty and force.

^k *I run not as one that is to pass undistinguished.*] Τρεχειν ἀδηλωσ, is to run unnoticed. But as some have explained it of "running without attending to the marks and lines which determined the path," I have hinted at that sense. As for Heinsius's interpretation, who explains it, "moving so slowly, as that he might seem to stand still," it is like many others peculiar to that writer, quite insupportable: no one, in such a circumstance, could be said to run at all.

^l *Beats the air, &c.*] In order to at-

tain the greater agility and dexterity, it was usual for those who intended to box in the games, to exercise their arms with the gauntlet on, when they had no antagonist near them; and this was called σκιομαχία, in which a man would of course *beat the air*. But Bos has taken a great deal of pains in his note here, to show that it is a proverbial expression for a man's *missing his blow*, and spending it, not on his enemy, but on empty air.

^m *Bruise and mortify my body.*] Τρωπαζω properly signifies *to strike on the face* as boxers did, and particularly on (the ὑπωπιον,) the part of it under the eyes, at which they especially aimed. Hence it comes to signify a *livid tumour* on that part; and sometimes it is proverbially used for a face terribly bruised, mortified, and disfigured, like that of a boxer just come from the combat; as Bos has shown at large, Exercit. p. 138, &c.

SECT. necessary precaution; lest after having served as a tion; lest that by any
 XVII. herald to others, and after having made procla- means, when I have
 mation of the glorious rewards to be attained, preached to others,
 1 Cor. and endeavoured to animate their zeal in the I myself should be
 ix. 27. pursuit, I should myself be disapprovedⁿ of the a cast-away.
 great Judge, and finally declared unworthy of
 obtaining a share in them.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. LET us learn, by the example of the apostle, a generous am-
 16, 18 bition of excelling in religion. Not of doing more indeed than
 our duty, for we owe God our best, and our all; but abounding
 in it to the utmost, carrying our love, our zeal, and our obe-
 dience, to the highest degree we can attain, and preserving an
 honest readiness to know our duty, even in circumstances in
 which there might be some plausible excuse for overlooking it.
 In particular, let the ministers of the gospel not think it much to
 their praise, to perform those services which it would be shame-
 ful and almost impossible for them to neglect; but labour to ac-
 quit themselves in the very best manner they can: showing in
 the whole of their conduct, that they are not animated only or
 chiefly by secular motives, in the labours they bestow upon the
 souls of men.

19, 22 They are peculiarly concerned to learn and imitate this con-
 descension of the apostle, in becoming all things to all men, if
 by any means he might gain some. But they are not the only
 persons who are interested in this. It is the duty of every
 Christian, to endeavour to please his neighbours and brethren for
 their good; and it will be our wisdom and happiness, upon such
 generous principles, to learn to govern and deny ourselves.

We are all called to engage in the most important race, in the
 most noble combat. The children of this world fatigue them-

ⁿ Lest after having served as an herald, I should be disapproved.] I thought it of importance to retain the primitive sense of these gymnastic expressions. It is well known to those who are at all acquainted with the original, that the word *κηρυξ* expresses the discharging the office of an herald, whose business it was to proclaim the conditions of the games, and display the prizes, to awaken the emulation and resolution of those who were to contend in them. But the apostle intimates, that there was this peculiar circumstance attending the Christian contest, that the person who proclaimed its laws and rewards to others, was also to engage himself; and that there would be a peculiar infamy and misery in miscarrying in

such a circumstance. *Αδοξίμος*, which we render *cast-away*, signifies one who is *disapproved* by the judge of the games, as not having fairly deserved the prize. Mr. Fleming, arguing that St. Paul knew his own sincere piety, and consequently might be assured of his future happiness, maintains that *to be cast away*, here signifies, being judged unworthy of a part in the first resurrection. (Fleming's Discourse on the first Resurrec. p. 89.) But it appears to me much more natural, to refer it to the whole Christian reward; as it is certain God engages his people to persevere by awful threatenings against apostasy, as well as by the promises of eternal life to those who continue faithful and constant.

selves for trifles, and exert the noble faculties of an immortal spirit to purposes far beneath its dignity. But all is not vanity. Every crown is not withering and corruptible. We have heard of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. And whatever there was in the prospect to awaken these Corinthians, still remains to awaken and animate us. Let us therefore keep our eyes and our hearts fixed upon it, and be in good earnest in what we do; often looking to the marks which are drawn in the word of God; realizing to ourselves the certain existence and formidable character of our invisible enemies; suspecting especially ourselves, fearing the treachery of our own corruptions, and using all that mortification which may promote our spiritual life and usefulness.

SECT.

XVII.

Ver.

24—26.

Who would not tremble, how high soever his profession or office may be—who would not tremble to hear St. Paul insinuate a supposed possibility, that after having preached to others, and made such animating proclamations of the heavenly prize to them, he might himself be rejected, as unqualified to receive it? Let us learn from it humility and caution; learn to watch against dangers, which will still surround us as long as we dwell in this body; and rejoice in the guardianship of Christ, who will at length deliver his faithful servants from every evil work, and preserve them to his heavenly kingdom.

SECT. XVIII.

Farther to awaken that holy caution which the apostle had suggested in the preceding section, he here represents to the Corinthians, on the one hand, the privileges which Israel of old enjoyed, and on the other, the Divine displeasure which they brought upon themselves by behaving in a manner so unworthy of them. 1 Cor. x. 1—13.

1 COR. x. 1.

MOREOVER, brethren, I would not that ye should be

1 CORINTHIANS x. 1.

I HAVE been urging you to run your Christian race with resolution and diligence; which you should the rather do, considering how fatally many of those miscarried who were once God's peculiar people, and favoured in a very extraordinary manner. Now this is so affecting a thought, that I must desire you, my brethren, to attend while I farther illustrate it; for I would by no means have you ignorant^a of so in-

SECT.

XVIII.

1 Cor.

x. 1.

^a *Would by no means have you ignorant.*] Mr. Locke thinks, that when the Corinthians inquired about the lawfulness of eating things sacrificed unto idols, they

SECT. structive a history. You have, I doubt not, of ignorant, how that all
 XVIII. ten heard, *that all our fathers*, whom Moses the our fathers were under the cloud, and
 1 Cor. great lawgiver of our nation led out of Egypt, all passed through the sea;
 x. 1. *were all under the* conduct of that miraculous

pillar of *cloud* and of *fire*, which did their camp so singular an honour; *and they all passed through the sea*, the power of God opening a way for them, while the mountains inclosed them on either side, and their Egyptian enemies were
 2 pressing hard upon their rear. *And this was* so wonderful and solemn an event, that I may say, *they were all baptized into Moses*, that is, initiated into the profession of that religion which he was to teach them from God, *in the cloud, and in the sea*. God did, as it were, solemnly receive them under protection, as his people; and they, by following his miraculous guidance, declared their dependence upon him,

3 and entire subjection to him. *And as they* proceeded in their journey, *they did all eat the same spiritual food*, that is, the manna, which for its excellence is called angels' food; (Psal. lxxviii. 25,) and which was indeed an emblem of the bread of life that cometh down from

4 heaven. *And they did also all drink of what* might be called, on the like principles, *the same spiritual drink*; for *they drank of that spiritual or mysterious Rock*,^b the wonderful streams of which followed them^c through so many of their

2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea;

3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink. (For they drank of that spiritual Rock that follow-

might urge that they could not be mistaken for heathens, because they maintained an open profession of Christianity, holding communion with the church, by partaking of the sacraments, as well as other acts of worship; and that they might be exposed to ill-will and ill-usage, if they did not sometimes comply with their neighbours. And he supposes the apostle had each of these ideas in view in what follows; it is possible he might.

^b *The same spiritual meat—the same spiritual drink.*] It is not necessary to understand by the same meat and drink, the same by which we Christians are supported; for this could not properly be said of any Israelites who were not true believers; but the meaning is, that they all, good and bad, shared the same miraculous supply of food and drink.

^c *That followed them.*] It is objected, that “this stream did not constantly

“follow them; for then they would have “had no temptation to have murmured “for want of water, as we know they did “at Kadesh, in the circumstances so fatal to Moses; nor would they have had “any occasion to buy water of the Edomites, as they proposed to do. Deut. “ii. 6.” Mr. Mede justly observes, that perhaps the streams from the first rock at Rephidim failed, for a farther trial of their faith; and at Kadesh God renewed the like wonder; but that likewise might probably fail when they came to the inhabited country of the Edomites, which was not till near the end of their wandering. Mede's Diatrib. in loc. He there illustrates the similitude between Christ and this rock, in many other particulars; but those mentioned in the paraphrase seem the most material.—That the word *was* imports here no more than *signified*, is extremely obvious; and instances of

ed them: and that Rock was Christ.)

wanderings and encampments; and that *Rock* was a most affecting representation of *Christ*, the Rock of ages, the sure foundation of his people's hopes, from whom they derive those streams of blessings which follow them through all this wilderness of mortal life, and will end in rivers of pleasure at the right hand of God for ever.

SECT. XVIII.

1 Cor. x. 4.

5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

It was the privilege of Israel as a people, to 5 enjoy such typical blessings as these; and yet it is plain that *God had no pleasure in the greatest part of them, for they were overthrown in the wilderness*: the whole generation that came adult out of Egypt was made to die there, and they sometimes died in such multitudes, that the ground was overspread with carcases, as a field is in which a battle has been fought.

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after things, as they also lusted.

Now these things were types and figures to 6 us, that we might learn wisdom at their expense, and not trust to external privileges, while we go on in a course of disobedience to the Divine authority; and particularly, that we might not lust after evil things, and indulge ourselves in irregular and luxurious desires; as they also lusted after quails in contempt of the manna, and thereby brought the wrath of God upon them, and were consumed with pestilential distempers, while the meat was yet between their teeth. (Psal. lxxviii. 30, 31.) Learn therefore, by what they suffered, to cultivate that temperance and self-denial which I have just been recommending to you. Neither be ye idolaters, 7 as some of them [were,] even while they yet continued at Mount Sinai; as you know it is written, (Exod. xxxii. 6, 19,) with relation to the feast of the golden calf, The people sat down to eat and drink of the sacrifices which were offered to it, and then they rose up to play and dance^d

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

the like use of it everywhere abound in scripture.

^d *To play and dance.*] Dr. Whitby observes, that though many commentators understand this of fornication, it is without sufficient reason. Fornication is indeed spoken of in another clause, and that the very next, ver. 8, which makes it less probable that it is intended here.

As the golden calf was designed as a symbol of Jehovah, there is no reason to imagine they would bring such an abomination into worship, however irregular, which was addressed to him. And Elsner (*Observ. Vol. II. p. 105,*) has abundantly vindicated the remark of Grotius, that *παίζειν* signifies to dance, a ceremony with which God himself had lately

SECT. in honour of this vain symbol of deity. And

XVIII. this naturally leads me to add another caution,

1 Cor.
x. 8.

no less suitable to your present circumstances than the former; *neither let us commit fornication,^e or lewdness of any kind, as some of them in their idolatrous revels committed [fornication;] and particularly when they eat the sacrifices of Baal Peor, and offended with the Midianitish women; the sad consequence of which was, that there fell in one day twenty-three thousand by the plague, besides those that were slain by the sword, who amounted to a thousand more.*

9 (Num. xxv. 1—9.) *Neither let us tempt Christ by our unbelief, after the tokens he hath given us to command our faith and engage our dependence; as some of the next generation of them also tempted [him,^f] while he resided among them, as the angel of God's presence; and were destroyed by fiery serpents, (Numb. xxi. 6,) from the venom of which others were recovered by that brazen serpent which was so illustrious*

10 a type of the Messiah. *Neither murmur ye under dispensations of Providence, which may seem at present to bear hard upon you, and are contrary to your present inclinations and interest; as some of them also murmured again and again, and were destroyed by the destroyer,^g who was commissioned by one judgment and another to take them off.*

11 *But let me remind you on the whole, as I hinted above, that all these calamitous things which happened unto them, were intended as types or examples to us, that we might learn what we are to expect in the like case; and they are*

8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are

been honoured, (Exod. xv. 20.) and which, it is very probable, might naturally be attended with the shouts and songs which Moses heard on approaching the camp, Exod. xxxii. 17, 18.

^e Commit fornication.] This was common at many idolatrous feasts among the heathen; and it was the more proper for the apostle to caution these Christians against it, as it was proverbially called the Corinthian practice, κορινθιαζειν being, as many have observed, equivalent to scortari. Strabo tells us, that in one temple of Venus at Corinth, there were no less than a thousand priestesses, who

made prostitution a part of their devotions to the goddess. Strabo, Lib. II. Cap. 16.

^f Tempt Christ as some of them tempted [him.] Though the word *him* be not in the original, it seems plainly to be implied; and this is a considerable text in proof of his residence with the church in the wilderness, as the angel of God's presence. Compare Exod. xxiii. 20; Isa. lxiii. 9; Heb. xi. 26; Acts vii. 38.

^g The destroyer.] The Jews generally interpret this of him whom they fancy to be the angel of death, and whom they call Sammael.

written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

12 Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.

13 There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come:^h as we live under the last dispensation which God will ever give to the children of men, and with which the whole economy of their probation shall wind up. *Therefore* let me urge this improvement of the whole survey upon you, and upon all into whose hand this epistle may come, and say, *Let him that thinketh he standeth* most securely, and who may be ready most confidently to trust in his own strength, *take heed lest he fall* so much the lower, in proportion to the degree in which he imagines himself out of all manner of danger.

It is true, indeed, and it is matter of great comfort and thankfulness to reflect upon it, that *no temptation has yet taken you, but such as is common to man,*ⁱ and such as human reason, properly exercised on the principles of that revelation which you enjoy, may furnish you with motives to resist. *And* we have the pleasure farther to reflect, that *God [is] faithful who hath promised*^k to preserve his people, and he *will not leave you to be tempted above your ability; but will with the temptation with which he permits you to be assaulted, provide you also with a way of escape, that if you be not wanting to yourselves, you may be able to bear [it;] yea, and may acquire new strength and honour by the combat.*

IMPROVEMENT.

MAY Christians be always sensible how happy they are in having received such useful hints from the New Testament to assist them in the interpretation of the Old, and particularly those which are here given. We see in Israel according to the flesh, an affecting emblem of the church in general. We see all their external privileges, though many and great, were ineffectual for their security when they behaved as unworthy of them.

^h *Ends of the world.] Τελος αἰώνων* properly signifies the concluding age or the last dispensation of God to mankind on earth; which, if we believe the gospel to be true, we must assuredly conclude that it is.

ⁱ *Common to man.] Ανθρωπίνου* may signify also proportionable to human

strength, as well as frequent to human creatures; the paraphrase therefore imports that.

^k *Faithful who hath promised.] Compare Psal. ciii. 13, 14, and numberless passages in which God encourages his people to hope for his presence and help in pressing danger.*

SECT.
XVIII.
1 Cor.
x. 11.

12

13

Ver.
6—11

SECT. XVIII. Alas! how affecting is the thought, that some who were under the miraculous cloud, who passed through the waters of the divided sea, who eat of the bread that came down from heaven, and drank of that living stream which omnipotent mercy had opened from the flinty rock, and made it to follow them in the windings of their journey, should yet become, instead of being on the whole the objects of divine favour and complacency, the monuments of wrath. Let us not ourselves therefore be high-minded, but fear. Let us mark the rocks on which they suffered this fatal shipwreck, if possible to keep clear of them; and pray that divine grace may direct our course. Let us avoid not only those superstitious and idolatrous rites of worship by which, as Protestants, we are in little danger of being ensnared, but also those lusts of the flesh which must, considering our superior advantage, be highly displeasing to God, even though they should not rise to a degree of equal enormity and scandal.

9 Let us especially take heed that we tempt not Christ, who has graciously been pleased to take us under his conduct, and to honour his church with so many demonstrative tokens of his presence. Nor let us murmur if, while we are in this wilderness state, we sometimes meet with difficulties in our way. Still let us make it familiar to our minds, that God adjusts the circumstances of every trial; even that God who stands engaged by the promises of his word, as well as the equity and goodness of his nature, not to permit us to be tempted above what we are able to bear. If we see not an immediate way of escape, let us calmly and attentively look around us, and humbly look up to him, that he may pluck our feet out of the net.

SECT. XIX.

The apostle farther pursues that caution against all approaches to idolatry which he had been suggesting in the former section: particularly arguing from that communion which Christians had with Christ at his table, which ought to place them at the remotest distance from what might justly be called having communion with devils. 1 Cor. x. 14—22.

1 CORINTHIANS x. 14.

SECT. XIX. **I** HAVE just expressed my confidence in the care of God to support you under any extraordinary temptation which may hereafter arise to draw you out of the way of your duty: *wherefore, my beloved brethren, being assured of this, let me exhort you carefully to flee from all approaches to idolatry, whatever circumstan-*

1 COR. x. 14. **W**HEREFORE my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

15 I speak as to wise men: judge ye what I say.

ces of allurements or danger may seem to plead for some degrees of compliance. *I now speak as unto wise men*: I use a rational argument, which will bear the strictest examination, and which I am willing should be canvassed as accurately as you please; *judge you therefore what I say*; for I will refer it to your own deliberate and cooler thoughts, whether there be not danger in those idolatrous participations which some of you are so ready to defend; and whether they may not naturally bring some degree of guilt upon your conscience?

SECT.

XIX.

1 Cor.

x. 15.

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

The sacramental cup, which is to us both the commemoration of past and the pledge of future blessing, which in the name of the Lord we solemnly bless,^a setting it apart to a holy and religious use; *is it not the token of our faith and our communion in these inestimable privileges which are the purchase of the blood of Christ*, shed for the remission of our sins? *The bread which we break*, and which was appointed in the first institution of the ordinance for this purpose, *is it not the communion of the body of Christ* in the like sense? That is, the token of our sharing in the privileges which he procured at the expense of sufferings by which his body was broken, and almost torn in pieces. *For we*

16

17 For we being many, are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

Christians being many, are yet, as it were, but different parts of one and the same broken bread,^b which we distribute [and] receive in token of our being members of one body; *for we are all partakers of one kind of holy bread*, and one cup, which we eat and drink together at the same table, in testimony of our mutual and in-

17

^a *Which we bless.*] This text very plainly shows, that there is a sense in which we may be said to bless the sacramental elements. To render it, *the cup over which or for which we bless God*, is doing great violence to the original. That is said to be *blessed* which is set apart to a sacred use, (Gen. ii. 3; Exod. xx. 11,) and on which the blessing of God is solemnly invoked.

^b *Of one bread.*] Many valuable manuscripts read it, *and of one cup*. Elsner has an admirable note upon this text, to prove, that eating together in a religious manner hath been, in almost all an-

cient nations, a token of mutual friendship. See Mr. Lowman's Hebrew Ritual, p. 54, and Maimonides, quoted by him there. See more especially, Dr. Cudworth's Discourse concerning the True Notion of the Lord's Supper, chap. i. and chap. vi. And it is certain also, as it is intimated below, that by sacrifices, and the feasts on them, they held communion with the real or supposed deity to which they were presented; as the author of a discourse on sacrifices has shown at large: but that this was the only end of all sacrifices, I cannot think that learned writer sufficiently to have proved.

SECT. violable friendship, cemented in Christ our
XIX. great and common Head.

^{1 Cor.}
^{x. 18.} Consider how it is with *Israel according to the flesh*, the lineal descendants of those who were the chosen and peculiar people of God: *are not they who eat of the sacrifices* which have been offered in the court of their temple at Jerusalem, esteemed to be *partakers of the altar* of God, on which part of them have been consumed? And is not their eating the flesh of these victims esteemed as an act of communion with the Deity, to whom they were offered? Now you may easily perceive, that the same argument will be conclusive to prove, that they who share in the sacrifices presented to idols, knowing what they do, and especially doing it in some apartments belonging to the temples of such idols, hold a kind of communion with these fictitious and detestable deities, by no means reconcilable with the sanctity of their Christian character, or the tenor of their sacramental engagements.

18 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices, partakers of the altar?

19 *What then do I say, that an idol of wood or stone, or of silver or gold, is in itself any thing divine? Or do I say, that the thing which is sacrificed to idols is in itself any thing morally and universally unclean? You well know that I intend to maintain nothing of this kind.*

19 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

20 *But on the other hand, you must be aware, that what the heathens sacrifice, they sacrifice to evil demons, and not to God; such spirits as those to which they address their devotions, must be sure to be wicked spirits, if they exist at all; and devils may well be supposed to use their utmost efforts to support such worship, it being grateful to them, in proportion to the degree in which it is affronting and injurious to the great object of Christian adoration, and ensnaring to the souls of men. Now I would not by any means that you, who have at your baptism solemnly renounced the devil and all his adherents, should in any degree have, or seem to have, communion with demons.^c And in-*

20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

21 *Ye cannot*

^c *I would not that ye should have communion with demons.] It is a monstrous notion of Olcarius, that the heathens imagined the very sustenance and body of their deities insinuated itself into the victim offered to them, and so was united to*

drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

deed this is most inconsistent with those solemn badges of your holy profession, by which your baptismal covenant is so frequently ratified and renewed. *Ye cannot with tolerable decency and consistency at one time drink of the cup of the Lord, in that holy rite in which you commemorate his death, and at another time of the cup of demons, of libations poured out in their honour, or cups drank at their feasts. Ye cannot surely think you should be partakers of the table of the Lord, and go from thence to the table of demons, or from theirs to his, to share alternately in such holy and such polluted rites and entertainments. Yet it is certain that by partaking in their feasts, you do, as it were, contract a kind of friendship and familiarity with these infernal spirits.*

SECT.

XIX.

1 Cor.
x. 21.

22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

Do we, by such a conduct as this, deliberate-22 ly mean to provoke the Lord to jealousy,^d by thus caressing those whom he abhors as his rivals? Must it not incense him exceedingly? and must it not, in its consequences, be detrimental and even fatal to us? Or are we stronger than he? so as to be able to resist or to endure the dreadful effects of his displeasure.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us hear and fear: for it is the tendency of every wilful sin to provoke the Lord to jealousy; it is a challenge to him, as it were, to let loose the fierceness of his wrath. And alas, how can such feeble creatures as we endure its terrors! Let the consideration urged by the apostle, to deter men from partaking in idolatrous sacrifices, be weighed by us, as extending to every thing whereby God may be dishonoured and Christ affronted.

Ver. 22.

the person eating the flesh of the sacrifices. Elsner (Observ. Vol. II. p. 108,) has sufficiently confuted this his weak inference from some mistaken passages of Firmicus and Jamblicus. But this learned and judicious critic has proved at large, from incontestible authorities, that the demons were considered as present at these sacrifices, and as taking their part with the worshippers in the common feast; by which means, as Maimonides expresses it in a very remarkable passage, (More Nevoch. Part III. cap. 46,) friendship, brotherhood, and familiarity was contracted between them, because "all ate at one table, and

"sat down at one board." The altar was called the *table of the Lord*, Mal. i. 12. Compare Deut. xxxii. 17. But then, as Dr. Cudworth hath shown, we are not to conclude from hence, that under the gospel-dispensation the *table of the Lord* is properly an *altar*; for the *Lord's supper* is not a *sacrifice*, but a *feast* upon a *sacrifice*. Cudworth on the True Notion of the Lord's Supper, chap. v.

^d *To jealousy, &c.*] Alluding to the notion of idolatry, as a kind of spiritual adultery, which moved the jealousy of God. Yet every deliberate sin is in effect daring his omnipotent vengeance.

SECT. XIX. They who are Christians indeed, and partake of that feast which the blessed Jesus hath instituted in commemoration of his dying love, do herein partake of the body and the blood of Christ. Let it be remembered as a pledge of everlasting obedience, since it is a memorial of infinite obligation: it shows that we belong to him, as his willing and peculiar people; that we renounce all his rivals, particularly Satan and his kingdom, and whatever favours and supports his accursed cause. Let us be faithful to our allegiance, and have no more to do with any of these abominations.

17, &c. Let us also remember this as a pledge of everlasting peace and love; we are all one bread, and one body. Let us not envy and provoke, grieve and revile one another; but study mutual comfort and edification. And when little jealousies arise, and our secular interests seem to interfere, which may often be the case, let us open our minds to those exalted sentiments which our common relation to Christ tends to inspire; and let the sweet remembrance of the communion we have had with him, and each other, in that holy ordinance, blot out of our minds the memory of every difference which might tend to promote disgust and alienation.

SECT. XX.

The apostle gives more particular directions as to the cases and circumstances in which things sacrificed to idols might or might not lawfully be eaten; and urges farther considerations to engage them willingly to resign their own gratifications in some instances, for the glory of God and the good of their brethren. 1 Cor. x. 23, to the end. Chap. xi. 1.

I CORINTHIANS X. 23.

SECT.
XX.

I HAVE said a great deal to guard you against all approaches to idolatry. In answer to this, I know, it may be replied, that there are certain things which may accidentally lead to it, and yet, being in their own nature indifferent, may be so used as to decline the danger. Granting it, then, that *all these things are lawful for me*, I am persuaded, nevertheless, you will readily acknowledge that *all such things are not in every circumstance expedient*. Granting, I say, that *all those things about which we have been discoursing are lawful for me*, yet it is undeniably apparent, that *all things edify not*; and

1 Cor.
x. 23.

1 Cor. x. 23.
ALL things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

I ought certainly to consider what may most effectually conduce to the edification of my neighbour and of the church in general, as well as what may suit my own particular inclination or convenience: for I may find good reasons for declining many things as ensnaring to others, which, were I to regard myself alone, might be perfectly indifferent.

SECT.
XX.
1 Cor.
x. 23.

24 Let no man seek his own: but every man another's wealth.

Let no one therefore seek the gratification of his own humour, or the advancement of what may seem his personal interest; but let every one pursue another's [welfare,] endeavouring to enrich all that are around him in holiness and comfort.

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience-sake.

Believe me, my brethren, I am desirous not to lay you under any unnecessary restraints. And, therefore, *whatever [flesh] is sold in the shambles,^a that I allow you to eat; asking no questions for conscience-sake, that is, not scrupulously inquiring whether it have, or have not, made a part of any idol-sacrifice.* For as the Psalmist expresses it, (Psal. xxiv. 1.) *The whole earth [is] the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.* All these things, therefore, are to be taken as they come to our hands, and used with cheerfulness and thanksgiving, as the common bounties of his providence to his human creatures.

26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

27 If any of them that believe not, bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go: whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience-sake.

And farther, if any of the unbelievers who live in your neighbourhood invite you^b to his house, and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you at the entertainment; not asking any question for conscience-sake, but receiving it, whatever it be, as that supply which Divine Providence has then been pleased to send you.

28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not, for his sake that

But if any one say to you, This food is part of what hath been sacrificed to an idol, eat it not; both out of regard to him that showed thee this circumstance, whether he be an

^a *Sold in the shambles.*] Herodotus observes, that the Egyptians, when they had cut off the head of their victims, used to carry the carcase to the market, and sell it to the Greeks, if they could find any to purchase it; if not, they threw it into the river, judging it unlawful to eat it themselves. Raphel. ex Herod. in loc. And though the Grecian priests had no such scruples, yet as they had often more flesh of their sacrifices than they and their fa-

milies could consume, it was natural for them to take this method of disposing of it to advantage; and at times of extraordinary sacrifice, it is probable the neighbouring markets might be chiefly supplied from their temples.

^b *Invite you.*] That καλεῖν often signifies to invite, Raphelius (Annot. ex Xen.) has shown at large; but to conclude that it must generally be so rendered, is very unwarrantable.

SECT. heathen, who may hereby be confirmed in his
XX. idolatry, or a brother, who may otherwise be
ensnared by thine example, and tempted to
violate the dictates of his own mind; and, I

1 Cor.
x. 28.

may say, *out of regard to conscience* too; for thou canst not injure thy brother in this respect, without subjecting thyself to some remorse on a serious reflection. And the scripture I mentioned before may suggest a pertinent consideration here: *for as the earth [is] the Lord's and the fulness thereof;*^c thou mayest reasonably hope he will provide for thee some other way, and mayest be assured that he cannot

29 want the means of doing it. *I say, [for the sake of] conscience*; but I mean *not thine own* immediately, *but that of another person*; for how indifferent soever thou mayest esteem the matter, thou art obliged in duty to be very cautious that thou dost not wound and grieve that of thy brother: (but you will observe that I here speak only of acts obvious to human observation; *for as to what immediately lies between God and my own soul, why is my liberty to be judged, arraigned and condemned at [the bar of] another man's conscience?*^d I am not, in such cases, to govern myself by the judgment and apprehension of others, nor have they any authority to judge or censure me for not concurring with them in their own narrow
30 notions and declarations. *For if I by the Divine grace and favour am made a partaker of the common gifts of Providence, why am I reviled for my free and cheerful use of that for which I give God my humble thanks, as tracing it up to the hand of the great supreme Benefactor?*)

31 *Therefore, on the whole, to conclude this discourse; since no one particular rule can be laid down to suit all the diversities of temper and apprehension which may arise, instead of un-*

showed it, and for conscience-sake. For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the others: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

31 Whether there-

^c *The earth, &c.*] Some good copies omit these words; yet they have so evident a propriety and beauty here, in contrast with verse 26, that I was by no means disposed to follow them.

^d *Why is my liberty, &c.*] Some think the meaning is, "Why should I use my liberty so as to offend the conscience of any?" Others think it is an ob-

jection in the mouths of the Corinthians, and to be thus understood: "But why should I suffer myself to be thus imposed upon, and receive law from any, where Christ has left me free?" I rather think that this and the 30th verse come in as a kind of parenthesis, to prevent their extending the former caution beyond what he designed by it.

fore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

charitable contentions with each other, or any thing that looks like mutual contempt, let us take all the pains we can to meet as in the centre of real religion; see to it then, that *whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, in the common as well as sacred actions of life, ye do all to the glory of God*, pursuing the credit of the gospel and the edification of the church; that he may be honoured in the happiness of his creatures, and more universally acknowledged as the author of all good.

SECT.
XX.

1 Cor.
x. 31.

32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

In this respect and in every other, see to it that ye *be inoffensive both to the Jews*, who, you know, abhor every thing that looks like the least approach to idol worship; *and to the Greeks,*^e and other unconverted Gentiles, who are so much attached to it that they are willing to catch at all pretences of justifying themselves in the practice: *and to the church of God*, whether consisting of circumcised or uncircumcised converts to Christianity, who would grieve to see the common edification obstructed in instances wherein they themselves might not be endangered. Endeavour to follow, in this respect, my example; acting *as I* also do, who study *in all things to please all men*, so far as I apprehend it for their real advantage, *not seeking mine own interest or gratification, but that of many, that they may be saved* by being brought to and confirmed in that religion on which their eternal happiness depends. In this grand and important consideration I lose every inferior view, as our great Lord and Master did; *be ye therefore herein imitators of me, as I also [am] of Christ*; and you will be in the way to please him, and to secure infinitely greater advantage from his favour, than you can ever be called to resign for the good of your brethren.

33 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

1 Corinthians xi. 1. Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

1 Cor.
xi. 1.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHAT exalted and generous sentiments are these! Well do they become every minister, yea every disciple of Christ. What

^e *Jews and Greeks.*] As these are both opposed to the church of God, I conclude he speaks of *unconverted Jews or Greeks*; and refers to the danger there might be of prejudicing them against Christianity, by the indulgences against which he cautions them.

SECT. a glorious society would his church soon be if each of its mem-
 xx. bers was actuated by them! not seeking his own things but those
 of others; not pursuing his own interest but that of many, that
 Ver. 23. they may be saved! Yea, how happy would each particular
 24—29 person be in such a wise and tender care of the whole, beyond
 what the most eager and successful pursuit of a separate interest
 can render him!

Let us endeavour to steer in the due medium, between the
 opposite extremes of an excessive scrupulosity and a presump-
 tuous rashness; and attend to the various distinguishing circum-
 25—27 stances which will demand a correspondent difference of conduct,
 in things which may seem to an inattentive eye much the same:
 not thinking that attention and caution needless, by which the
 31 glory of our God and the edification of our brethren may be pro-
 moted. We may expose ourselves in consequence of this ten-
 derness of conscience, to inconveniences, straits, and contempt:
 but let us commit all our concerns to that Divine Providence
 26—28 which extends itself to all its works; and rejoice to think that
 the earth is the Lord's, and all its fulness: out of which he will
 not fail to furnish necessary supplies to those who fear him, and
 are thus solicitous to preserve a conscience void of offence be-
 fore him. But while we are strictly cautious ourselves, let us
 not be rash and severe in our censures of others, who stand or
 fall to their own master, and who may in some instances have
 reasons to us unknown, for a conduct most different from ours.

Oh that divine grace may teach us all to govern our whole
 31 lives by this extensive important maxim: that whether we eat
 or drink, or whatsoever we do, we pursue the glory of God!
 Let us dignify and sanctify all the common actions of life by
 performing them from these high and holy motives; and so
 turning them into sacrifices of devotion and love. Then shall
 32 we not only avoid giving offence to others, but shall conduct
 ourselves in such a manner as shall make us burning and shin-
 ing lights in the world, and extend our sphere of usefulness far
 beyond that of our personal converse, and perhaps beyond the
 date of our precarious abode in this transitory world.

Thus glorifying our heavenly Father on earth, and finishing
 the work he has given us to do, we may hope through his grace
 in Christ to be glorified with him above, and to be brought to
 a brighter image of that Saviour who has set us so perfect an
 example of the temper and conduct here recommended, which
 even the blessed apostle Paul followed only with unequal steps.

SECT. XXI.

The apostle sets himself to reform some indecencies which had crept into the church of Corinth; and particularly that of women prophesying with their head uncovered. 1 Cor. xi. 2—16.

1 COR. XI. 2.

NOW I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.

3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman, is the man; and the head of Christ, is God.

1 CORINTHIANS XI. 2.

I HAVE just now exhorted you, my brethren, to imitate me, as I endeavour to copy the example of our blessed Lord. And while I am giving you such an exhortation, I ought to express my satisfaction in seeing many of you so ready to comply with it. I praise such of you therefore, that in all things you are mindful of me, and strenuously retain the charges I gave, as I committed [them] to you. But as to your inquiring concerning the manner in which women should deliver any thing in public, when they are by a Divine impulse called to do it; I would have you to know, in order to regulate your judgment and conduct aright, that Christ is the head of every man; so that every Christian should often recollect the relation in which he hath the honour to stand to him, as an engagement to observe the strictest decorum in his whole behaviour. And if the different sexes be compared, the head of the woman is the man; to whom therefore she ought to pay a reverent respect as in the Lord. And the head of Christ [is] God: Christ, in his mediatorial character, acts in subordination to the Father, who rules by him, and hath constituted him Sovereign of all worlds, visible and invisible. And as the Father's glory is interested in the administration of Christ, so is the glory of Christ in some measure interested in the conduct and behaviour of those men whose more immediate head he is: and I may add, of these women whose heads such men are.

SECT.
XXI.

1 Cor.
xi. 2.

4 Every man praying or prophesying,

Now, upon this principle, I may say, in reference to the usages which prevail at this time in your country; every man praying or prophesying in a public assembly, whether he give forth inspired psalms or hymns, or utter predictions, or common instruction; if he do it with

SECT. [his] head covered, acting therein contrary to the received rules of decency among us, he in a degree dishonours Christ his head,^a as behaving unworthy his relation to him. And on the other hand, every woman, praying or prophesying, under such inspiration as above, with [her] head unveiled, dishonoureth man, who is her head, by behaving in such a manner as is indecent in an assembly consisting of so many men as are usually present on these occasions: for I may say, that it is in this respect the same as if she were shaven: shaving her head is only taking off the natural covering, and exposing it bare; which is so shameful a thing, that you know it has often been inflicted as a proper kind of punishment on women of the most abandoned character; and it is scandalous, that any thing like this should be used in your Christian assemblies; and this too, by persons pretending to extraor-

having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

1 Cor.
xi. 5.

5 But every woman that prayeth, or prophesieth, with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

6 ordinary characters and assistances. I may therefore say, if a woman will not be veiled, let her even be shorn; but if it be apparently shameful for a woman to have her hair shorn, or shaved off, let her keep as far as possible from so disagreeable an appearance; and have her head covered with a proper veil, at the times and in the circumstances of which we now speak.

7 For a man indeed ought not to have [his] head covered, as being the immediate image and glory of God, and made in his likeness as the first copy of its kind, before woman was created. It is decent, therefore, that he should appear with the marks of that superiority which he indeed bears; but the woman should forbear it; and it is enough to say of her, that she is the glory of the man: to whom God hath done no inconsiderable honour, as well as favour, in making

6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn; but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

7 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

^a Every man praying, &c. with his head covered, dishonoureth his head.] It was certainly (as Dr. Whitby and others have proved,) the custom among the Greeks and Romans, as well as the Jews, to appear in worshipping assemblies with their head covered: and it is certain the Jewish priests wore a kind of turban, when ministering in the temple. But it seems that the Corinthian men wore a veil, out of regard to Pharisaical tradi-

tions, and in imitation of the custom prevailing in the synagogues; which therefore the apostle disapproved. The women seem to have their hair dishevelled, when praying by Divine inspiration; (which seems to have been the only case in which they could regularly pray in public:) this made them resemble those pagan priestesses, who pretend to be actuated by their gods; the apostle therefore with great propriety discourages it.

so excellent and amiable a creature for his benefit and comfort. Yet still her state of subjection to him should be remembered, and it is very expedient she should appear in public with some tacit acknowledgment of it. For 8

SECT.
XXI.
1 Cor.
xi. 7.

8 For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.

9 Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

10 For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head, because of the angels.

the man is not, in the first production of his nature, taken out of the woman; but, as we read in the sacred history, (Gen. ii. 21—23.) the woman out of the man. Neither [was] the man created for the sake of the woman, to accommodate and assist her; but the woman for the sake of the man, that he might have a help meet for him, which before he found not in the whole creation. (Gen. ii. 20.) On this account, therefore, as well as for the other reasons I have mentioned above, the woman ought to have upon [her] head a veil, as a token of her being under the power^b and subjection of the man; and so much the rather should she wear it in worshipping assemblies, because of the angels who are especially present there, and before whom we ought to be exceedingly careful that nothing pass which may be indecent and irregular, and unlike that perfect order and profound humility with which they worship in the Divine presence.

^b Power on [her] head.] Mr. Locke acknowledges, with a modesty which does him much honour, that he did not understand this text; and many seem to have darkened it by their attempts to explain it. But the chief difficulty does not lie in the word *power*; which must, to be sure, be understood of a veil which married women wore on their head, as a token of subjection to their husband, (see Gen. xxiv. 65.) and Mr. Godwin (Moses and Aaron, p. 236,) supposes the *veil* was in Hebrew called רָדִיד, (*Radid*,) from a root, רָדַד, (*Radad*,) which signified *subjection*; so that the *veil* was, as it were, the *habit* by which a woman showed she considered herself in *subjection*; and Chardin observes, that the married women in Persia wear a peculiar habit to the very same purpose. Chard. Pers. Vol. II. p. 187. It is much more difficult to ascertain the meaning of that clause, *because of the angels*. It seems neither reasonable nor decent to explain this of young ministers, as if they were in

peculiar danger of being ensnared by the beauty of women; and it is more grossly absurd still to suppose with Tertullian, (de Vet. Virg. § 7,) that there was any room to apprehend it could be a snare to celestial spirits; (which mistake seemed to be grounded on the wild interpretation of Gen. vi. 2, so generally received among the fathers.) Dr. Whitby understands it of evil angels, and thinks it refers to the punishment which Eve incurred, (Gen. iii. 16,) for hearkening to the suggestions of Satan. A late ingenious writer by ἀγγελων understands *spies*; who, he supposes, came into Christian assemblies to make ill-natured remarks, and so would be glad to blaze abroad any indecencies they might observe there. (See Mr. Gough's Diss. in loc.) I have not room to canvass all these; but only add, in support of the sense which, as least exceptionable, I have followed, that the presence of *angels* in religious assemblies is favoured by Eccles. v. 1, 6, and the figures of *Cherubim* in the tabernacle and temple.

SECT.

XXI.

1 Cor.

xi. 11.

I have treated the matter with a plainness and freedom becoming my character; *nevertheless*, let not any hints which I have dropped of the superior dignity of the man be abused, to render him haughty and tyrannical; for it is evident that *the man [is] not without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord*. You know that the existence and comfort of either sex has a dependence upon the other; which the genius of the Christian religion requires us to consider, and to behave in a manner corresponding to it. *For as the woman [was] at first taken from the rib of the man, whom he ought therefore to love as part of himself, and she to revere him, as under God the source of her being; so also, in the ordinary course of the Divine production, the man [is] by the woman, born, nourished, and in the tenderest years of life educated by her; a circumstance that ought to be ever most tenderly remembered, as a spring of grateful affection and regard. But let me add, that whether in the first creation or the successive production of human creatures, all things [are] of God; whose constitution ought therefore humbly and obediently to be revered, and all the duties of relative life performed, as for his sake and to his glory.*

- 13 But with respect to the particular circumstance I was speaking of, I may leave you to *judge of yourselves whether it be*, according to the usages generally prevailing among us, *decent^c for a woman to pray to God with that masculine and confident air which she must have when her head is uncovered*: Or rather, *doth not the sight immediately shock us, previous to any reasonings upon it in our own mind? So that nature itself seems to teach you, that, on the one hand, for a man to have long hair, solicitously adjusted and artfully adorned, is such a mark of an effeminate character, as is, on the whole, a disgrace to him. Whereas, on the other hand, if a woman hath long hair spread over her shoulders, it is rather a glory*

11 Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

12 For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.

13 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?

15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her, for

^c Judge whether it be decent, &c.] The Grecian women, excepting the heathen priestesses, used to appear in their veils when they came into public assemblies; as we find in Homer, and many other ancient writers.

her hair is given her for a covering. *to her; for her hair was given her instead of a veil, in the first constitution of her nature, and before the arts of dress were invented or needed.* SECT. XXI. 1 Cor. xi. 15.

16 But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God. Thus the matter appears to me, when I reflect upon the original and the present state of things, and what seems from that to be the voice of nature. *But if any one appears to be contentious, and will dispute this, upon his own different views of what is naturally decent, I shall not controvert it farther; but content myself with saying, that we have here no such custom, for women to appear with their head uncovered; neither do I know of its prevailing in any of the other churches of God,^d whether planted by me, or any of my brethren. I think therefore that it ought to be avoided, as a singularity which may appear like affectation, and give offence, even if it be not judged a natural indecorum. And thus I leave the affair to your consideration; and promise myself, you will give me no farther cause of complaint on this head.* 16

IMPROVEMENT.

LET Christians frequently remember the honourable relation Ver. 3. in which they stand to Christ as their Head; and as beyond all⁴ dispute he is, under his mediatorial character, most willingly and joyfully subject to God, let us learn to imitate him in that cheerful and entire subjection, out of love and reverence to him, guarding against whatever is unbecoming, lest he be dishonoured thereby.

By the passage before us, we see the force of custom for determining, in many respects, what is decent, and what is otherwise. Let us maintain a proper regard to this: lest even our good should be, through our imprudence, evil spoken of, and all our infirmities magnified into crimes. Let us often recollect the original dignity of our nature, by which we are the image and glory of God: that, so far as by sin and folly this honour is lost, we may endeavour to regain it; and where it is not, may think and act more suitably to so high a relation.

When in any act of Divine worship we have the honour to 10

^d Nor any of the other churches.] Mons. Amyraut understands it in this sense: "The churches do not use to contend with me, but to submit to my decision;" but the former clause *we have no such custom*, will not admit this. The argument on the other interpretation is clear and strong.

SECT. approach the blessed God, let us reverence his awful presence,
XXI. and even that of his holy angels who attend the assemblies of the saints. We pray the will of God may be done upon earth, as it is done in heaven: let us be careful to worship God in such a manner, that these celestial spirits, who ever appear before him with sacred awe, may not be offended at the rudeness and folly of sinful mortals; whom they may well wonder to see admitted, in their best estate, to this Divine privilege, which they have forfeited by repeated provocations.

Ver. As for what St. Paul observes of the mutual dependence which
11, 12 the sexes have on each other, let it dispose them to mutual candour and respect: avoiding the cruel tyranny, or the vain affectionation, which often arms them, on either side, with ungenerous reflections. And as all things are of God, let it be our concern that all things be to him; that all things be faithfully employed for his glory; and whatever comforts we receive in relative life, which are indeed many and important, let us adore the wisdom of the Divine constitution in the original formation of our nature, and the secret influence and conduct of his providence, in the regulation of our respective circumstances and affairs.

SECT. XXII.

The Apostle, in order to reform several scandalous abuses of the Lord's supper which had crept into the church of Corinth, leads back their views to the original institution of the solemn ordinance, and infers from thence the danger of profaning it. 1 Cor. xi. 17, to the end.

1 CORINTHIANS XI. 17.

SECT. **T**HUS you have my free sentiments of the
XXII. manner in which women, even when most singularly honoured by God, should appear in your religious assemblies. *But while I am giving [you] these instructions, I do not, and cannot, praise [you,] as I would, on several accounts; and particularly on this, that when you come together in these assemblies, and on the most solemn occasions, there are such irregularities, and sometimes such indecencies among you, that your meeting is not for the better, but for the worse, as you lose more in religion one way*
18 *than you gain another. For before I mention any other instance of this, I must observe, in the first place, that when ye come together in*

1 COR. XI. 17.

NOW in this that I declare unto you, I praise you not, that you come together not for the better, but for the worse.

18 For first of all, when ye come toge-

ther in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it.

19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved, may be made manifest among you.

20 When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper.

the church,^a though it is so evident that nothing but reverence to God, and love to each other, should reign on such occasions; *I hear that there are schisms, or uncharitable and angry divisions and disputes, among you, and I do, in some respect, and with regard to some of you, believe it: For in the course of things, it is to be expected, 19 that there must be even heresies among you:*^b contentions will arise to such a height, that separations will ensue. The warmth of some tempers evidently leads to this; and Providence may probably permit it, *that they who are of the most approved characters, may be made manifest among you, by the steadiness and candour of their conduct.*

It is particularly grievous to me, to be forced²⁰ to complain of your irregular behaviour, while celebrating that most excellent and endearing ordinance of the eucharist: but I am compelled to do it; and *therefore* I tell you plainly, that *when you come together* in such a manner as you do, *into one place*, under pretence of attending this grand solemnity, *it is not eating the Lord's supper:*^c it does not deserve to be called by

^a *Come together in the church.*] Some have urged this as an instance in which *church* signifies a *building* for public worship; and have urged also the 22d verse in the same view; but both may be interpreted of the assembly, as the phrase shows.

^b *There must be even heresies.*] It seems evident from hence, that heresy is spoken of as something worse than the schism mentioned above; but whether it be an evil entirely of a different kind, or only of a higher degree, is not so clear from this passage. I think, for reasons not here to be enumerated, that the word αἵρεσις signifies a *sect of people separated from others*, and forming what we call a distinct denomination; whereas there may be schism without separation, if people assembling together have uncharitable contentions with each other; which was the case of these schismatical Corinthians.

^c *It is not eating the Lord's supper.*] The Corinthians seem to have been guilty of two great faults in the matter here referred to, which St. Paul, in the following discourse, labours to reform:—The one, that they confounded the *Lord's supper*

with the common meals they made together; (from whence the *love-feasts* were afterwards derived;) thinking it sufficient (as the Quakers now do,) if they mingled some thoughts of Christ's death with this common use of bread and wine:—The other, that they used such a rapacious behaviour at these *feasts*, and treated one another so rudely and unkindly, as on their own principles would have been very indecent. This latter circumstance is finely illustrated in a passage from Xenophon, (Memor. lib. 3. cap. xiv. § 1.) in which he observes, that Socrates was much offended with the Athenians for their conduct at their common suppers, as some prepared delicately for themselves, while others were but slenderly provided for. That worthy man endeavoured to shame them out of this low taste, by offering his provisions to all the company. Mr. Grove hath with great propriety mentioned a passage from Socrates the ecclesiastical historian, (lib. v. cap. 22,) in which he speaks of some Egyptians living near Alexandria, who partook of the *sacrament* in a very peculiar manner, (as it seems much after the Corinthian fashion,) introducing it with a jovial feast,

SECT.
XXII.

1 Cor.
xi. 18.

SECT. that name. Instead of regarding it in a holy
 XXII. and religious view, you confound it with a com-
 mon meal; and do not indeed behave in the
 manner that decency would require if it were
 no more than a common meal: *for* though you
 sit down at what, even in that case, ought to be
 a social and friendly table, yet each has his par-
 ticular mess, and without offering a share of it
 in an obliging manner to the rest, *every one in*
eating, greedily taketh before [the other] his own
supper,^d both the food and liquor which he
 hath provided; *and so while one poor brother, for*
want of suitable provisions, is hungry, another
eats and drinks to excess;^e which would in all
 circumstances be a scandal to a Christian, and
 especially to a religious assembly, as this cer-
 tainly ought to be.

21 For in eating,
 every one taketh be-
 fore *other* his own
 supper; and one is
 hungry, and another
 is drunken.

22 What a reproach is this to your common pro-
 fession! Give me leave to ask you, *have you*
not houses to eat and to drink in on common oc-
 casions, that you must come to the place of
 public worship, thus to entertain yourselves
 there, which is certainly in all views very ill-
 judged? *Or do you despise the church of God,*
which you must greatly offend by such a con-
duct as this; and at the same time shame those
that have not provisions and accommodations of
 their own, and might hope at your common
 meals to be relieved? *What shall I say to you*
on this occasion? Shall I praise you in this [re-
spect?] I wish I could fairly and honourably do
 it; but at present *I praise [you] not*; I must
 rather blame you, and exhort you to amend
 what is so grossly amiss.

22 What, have ye
 not houses to eat and
 to drink in? or de-
 spise ye the church
 of God, and shame
 them that have not?
 what shall I say to
 you? shall I praise
 you in this? I praise
 you not.

23 And that my admonitions and exhortations
 may come with the greater weight, let me lead
 back your thoughts to the original institution of
 this profaned and affronted ordinance; which if

23 For I have re-

in which they regaled themselves with
 all kinds of food. See Grove on the
 sacrament, p. 108.

^d *His own supper.*] This monstrous,
 and to us unaccountable circumstance, is
 cleared up by what is said above of the
social suppers used among the Greeks: to
 which each brought his own provisions,
 which were not always made so com-
 mon to the whole company as decency
 and friendship might have required.

^e *Drinks to excess.*] The word *μεθεuet*
 has this signification in a great lati-
 tude; but one would hope, that though
 the Jews and heathens were often in-
 toxicated in their religious festivals,
 these Christians, imprudent and irre-
 gular as they were, did not carry their
 excesses so far; and therefore I chose
 to soften the version. Compare Vol. I.
 p. 139, note ^k.

ceived of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread:

you reflect upon, I am sure you must be heartily grieved at the indignities you have offered it, and will be engaged to resolve you will never repeat them. Now I am able to speak of this matter with great certainty and exactness: for my knowledge of it did not depend upon any human tradition whatsoever; but *I received* by special revelation from the Lord^f Jesus Christ himself, that which I also delivered to you in my former preaching on this subject, in which, as in all things else, I have been careful most exactly to adhere to my original instructions. And you know the substance of it was this: *That the Lord Jesus Christ, the very [same] night in which he was betrayed,* and amidst all those serious thoughts which his own nearly-approaching sufferings must suggest, after he had finished the paschal supper, *took bread*, some of the remainder of those unleavened cakes with which that solemn feast is celebrated: *And hav-*

SECT.
XXII.
1 Cor.
xi. 23.

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

ing, in a most reverent manner, *given thanks* to God, the great Author of all temporal and spiritual blessings, and looked up to him for his blessing upon it for the purposes to which it was going to be appropriated, *he brake [it]* into several pieces, *and* distributing it to his disciples who were present, *said, Take* this bread, and *eat* it with due reverence and regard; for *this is* the solemn representation of *my body which is* just going to be *broken*, by the most bitter pains and agonies, *for you* and your salvation; *this therefore do* in all the succeeding ages of my church, as a *commemoration of me*; ^g that the memory

^f *I received by special revelation, &c.]* This epistle seems to have been written before any of the Gospels; and it seems to be intimated, Gal. i. 17, &c. that when he wrote it, he had seen none of the apostles. It is very remarkable that the institution of this ordinance should make a part of that immediate revelation with which Christ honoured him; and it affords a strong argument for the perpetuity of it in the church. For had others of the apostles (as Barclay presumes to insinuate,) mistaken what passed at the last passover, and founded the observation of the eucharist on that mistake, surely Christ would rather have corrected this error in his new revela-

tion to St. Paul, than have administered such an occasion of confirming Christians in it. For some notes which might have been inserted here, see Vol. II. sect. 172.

^g *This do, &c.]* Because the word *πρὸς* signifies, in some few instances, *to sacrifice*, Dr. Bret would render it, *sacrifice this*; whence he infers that the *eucharist* is a *sacrifice*. And a learned prelate in the Council of Trent pleaded, much with the like judgment, that when Christ uttered these words before the cup, he ordained them priests; whereas he gave them the bread as laics. See Father Paul's Hist. of the Council of Trent, p. 510.

SECT. of my painful death may be kept up in the
XXII. world, and your hearts and those of all my
faithful followers be properly affected with the

1 Cor.
xi. 25.

In like manner also [he took] the cup; which, you well remember, was after he had supped; so that it was by no means a part of that meal they had been making, but something quite distinct from it: and he likewise distributed that to them as he had done the bread, saying, This cup is the solemn seal and memorial of the new covenant which is established in my blood, by which all its invaluable blessings are derived to you. This likewise do, as often as ye drink [it,] in commemoration of me, and in order to maintain the memory of my bleeding dying

26 *love in the church and the world. You therefore,^h as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup,ⁱ do indeed perform a very solemn and important action; for, according to his own interpretation and institution, you show forth, and as it were proclaim, the Lord's death in its most affecting circumstances; which the church must throughout all ages continue to do until he come,^k to close the present scene of things, and to receive all his faithful servants to a place where, for ever dwelling with him, they will no more need*
27 *these memorials of an absent Saviour. So that you see, by a farther consequence, whosoever shall eat this bread or drink^l [this] cup of the*

25 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord un-

^h *Therefore, as often as ye eat.] It is plain that $\gamma\alpha\gamma$ must here have the force of an illative particle; as it also has Luke xx. 38.*

ⁱ *Eat this bread, &c.] It is no wonder a text in which this element is so plainly called bread after consecration, should be urged against the Popish doctrine of transubstantiation. And it signifies little for them to plead, that the scripture sometimes calls things changed, by the name of the thing out of which they were made, (as Adam is called dust, Gen. iii. 19; Aaron's serpent a rod, Exod. vii. 12.) or calls them according to their sensible appearance, (Josh. v. 13; Mark xvi. 5;) for these instances rather turn against them, by proving, that where the literal interpretation is evidently absurd, we must have recourse to the figurative.*

^k *Until he come.] Nothing can be more unreasonable than to refer this (as*

the Quakers do,) to the time when Christ should come, by his *spiritual illumination* on their minds, to take them off from carnal ordinances; for, not to insist upon it, that we have at least as much need of the *Lord's supper* as the primitive Christians had, (not having so many advantages as they to keep up the memory of Christ in our minds, to quicken us to holiness and to unite us in love,) it is evident the grand coming of Christ by the Spirit was, when it was poured out on the day of Pentecost; an event which had happened many years before the date of this epistle.

^l *Eat or drink.] So it is in the original, $\eta\pi\alpha\gamma\eta$; nor could our translators surely be under any temptation to render it, *eat and drink*, to elude the argument drawn from hence for communion in one kind only; since, as that excellent French preacher, Mons. Superville, observes, (Serm. Vol.*

worthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

Lord unworthily, that is, in an irreverent manner, without a due regard to him, and to the great original purpose of its appointment, *shall be counted guilty of profaning and affronting in some measure that which is intended to represent the body and blood of the Lord*; and consequently the affront does evidently abound to our Lord himself, who was pleased with infinite condescension, for our sakes, to assume human flesh, and to suffer in it.

SECT.
XXII.

1 Cor.
xi. 27.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

Let none *therefore* come to the ordinance in 28 a rash and irreverent manner; but *let a man examine himself* as to his knowledge of its intent, and his desire to comply with its great design; and so let him eat of the sacramental bread, and drink of the cup which is used with it. For 29 he that eateth and drinketh in an irreverent, profane, and *unworthy manner*,^m must certainly displease and provoke God; so that it may truly be said that he *eateth and drinketh judgment to himself*:ⁿ he takes the readiest way to bring down the judgments of God upon him, *not distinguishing the Lord's body*, nor making that proper difference which he ought to make between that and common food.

30 For this cause many are weak and

And accordingly many of you have actually 30 brought such judgments upon yourselves; and I must plainly tell you, it is *upon this account*, and to manifest the Divine displeasure against you for such shameful irregularities, that God hath sent distempers among you, so that *many of you [are]*

IV. p. 245,) it might as well prove that the cup may be received without the bread, as the bread without the cup. So that it is surprising assurance in a late Popish writer to plead from hence that communion in one kind only was the practice of the Corinthian church. See Mod. Controv. p. 100.

^m *In an unworthy manner.*] To receive to purposes of faction or intemperance, was receiving very unworthily; but the sense of that phrase must extend to every manner of receiving contrary to the nature and design of the ordinance; and consequently, to the case of doing it merely in a *secular* view, which I heartily pray that all concerned in it may seriously consider.

ⁿ *Judgment to himself.*] I think it the most unhappy mistake in all our version of the Bible, that the word *ἰσχυρά* is here rendered *damnation*. It has raised a dread in tender minds, which has greatly obstructed the comfort and edification they might have received from this ordinance. The apostle afterwards says, *we are judged*, (that is, as he afterwards explains it, *we are corrected*,) *that we may not be condemned*; which plainly shows the judgment spoken of might be fatherly chastisements. This sin, as sin, does indeed expose us to condemnation, should God be extreme to mark it, as an irreverent behaviour under *any other* ordinance does; but it is *superstition* to set this at so vast a distance from all the rest, as many do,

SECT. now *weak and sick, and some considerable num-* sickly among you,
XXII. bers of your society *are fallen asleep in death.* and many sleep.

1 Cor. Survivors therefore ought to lay the matter se-
xi. 30. riously to heart, and set about an immediate re-

31 formation. *For if we would judge ourselves* 31 For if we would
with a due severity and impartiality, *we should* judge ourselves, we
not surely be so severely judged and animad- should not be judg-
ed.

32 verted upon by God. *But when we are thus* 32 But when we
judged, it is not in a displeasure wholly inex- are judged, we are
orable, but with kind designs of paternal good- chastened of the
ness; and *we are corrected of the Lord, that we* Lord, that we should
may not be condemned with the impenitent world, not be condemned
and consigned over to final and everlasting de- with the world.
struction.

33 *Therefore, my brethren, in one word, when* 33 Wherefore, my
ye come together to eat in those feasts which brethren, when ye
frequently precede the administration of this or- come together to eat,
dinance among you, *wait decently and respect-* tarry one for another.

34 convened. *And if any one be so hungry that* 34 And if any man
he cannot conveniently stay till that time, let hunger, let him eat
him eat at his own house; ^P or at least take a kind at home; that ye
of antepast, that may prevent any inconvenience come not together
arising from a little necessary delay; *that you* unto condemnation.
may not come together to your condemnation, and And the rest will I
in such a manner as to provoke the judgment set in order when I
of God against you. It may suffice to have said come.
thus much for the present on this subject; *and*
what remains farther to be adjusted, *I will re-*
gulate when I come to Corinth; which, if Pro-
vidence answer my hopes and succeed my
schemes, will be in a little time.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHAT just matter of thankfulness to our blessed Redeemer
Ver. 23. does that account of the institution of the sacred supper afford
us, which St. Paul assures us he received immediately from
him. Let us often reflect it was in that very night in which

° Judge ourselves.] *Διακρίνω*, ver. 29,
signifies to distinguish; here *διακρίνομεν*
signifies examining that we may distin-
guish, and judge of our own charac-
ter and fitness for the sacrament. Mr.
Locke justly observes that he is lit-
tle attentive to St. Paul's writings who
has not observed that he often re-
peats a word he had used before, though

in a sense something different from the
preceding.

^P Let him eat at his own house.] Mr.
Amyraut and Mr. Cradock (Apost. Hist.
p. 174,) understand this as a prohibition
of love feasts; but I think it evident from
antiquity, they were retained in the
church long after, though dubious whe-
ther they prevailed so soon,

he was betrayed, that his thoughts so compassionately wrought for our comfort and happiness; when it might have been imagined that his mind would be entirely possessed with his personal concerns, with the doleful scene of his approaching sufferings. We learn from this account, the perpetuity, as well as the great leading design of the ordinance. We show forth the Lord's death, and we show it forth till he come. If we do indeed desire to preserve the memory of Christ's dying love in the world, if we desire to maintain it in our own souls, let us attend this blessed institution; endeavouring by the lively exercise of faith and love, to discern, and, in a spiritual sense, to feed upon the Lord's body. Nor let any humble and upright soul be discouraged, by these threatenings of judgment, to the profane sinners who offered such gross affronts to this holy solem-29 nity; affronts, which none of us are in any danger of repeating. These scandalous excesses, when they pretended to be worshipping God on this great occasion, might justly provoke the eyes of his holiness, might awaken the arm of his indignation. Yet even these sinners were chastised, that they 32 might not be finally and for ever condemned.

Let not any then be terrified, as if every soul that approached the ordinance without due preparation, must by necessary consequence seal its own damnation. Thus to attend the table of the Lord is indeed a sin; but blessed be God, not a sin too great to be forgiven. Let those therefore, who, though they feel in their hearts a reverential love to Christ, yet have hitherto refrained from attending this feast of love, be engaged to come; to come with due preparation and self-examination, as to their repentance and faith, their love and obedience; then may they, with the most hearty welcome from the great Lord of the feast, eat of this bread and drink of this cup; receiving it as the memorial of Christ's body broken and of his blood shed for the remission of our sins. Through that blood alone let us seek this invaluable blessing, without which, indeed, nothing can be a solid and lasting blessing to us: and let us, on every occasion, treat our brethren with a tenderness and respect becoming those who have considered ourselves and them as redeemed by that precious blood, and indebted to it for the hopes of everlasting salvation.

In a word, let us never rest in the external rites or exercises of worship, how decently and regularly soever performed; but look to our inward temper, and to the conduct of our minds, if we desire to maintain their peace, and that our coming together should be for the better, and not for the worse.

SECT. XXIII.

The Apostle comes to treat on spiritual gifts; and introduces what he had farther to say concerning them, by observing, that various as they are, they all proceed from the same sacred Agent, and are intended for the edification of the same body, in which all Christians are united.
 1 Cor. xii. 1—13.

1 CORINTHIANS XII. 1.

SECT.
XX III.1 Cor.
xii. 1.

IT is now time I should proceed to speak something concerning those *spiritual* [gifts] with which God hath been pleased so abundantly to bless you, my Corinthian *brethren*: and as to the right use and improvement of which, *I* would not by any means have you ignorant.

2 Upon this head *you* in the general know, that during your natural state, before the cheering rays of the gospel broke in upon you, *ye were heathens*, without any knowledge of the true God, and *carried* by a blind implicit credulity after *dumb idols*; which were so far from being able to bestow on their votaries any supernatural endowments, by which they might be enabled to speak extraordinary truths, or in languages before unknown, that they were themselves destitute of the common powers of speech, or any capacity of perception and action. Yet you were blindly enslaved to the worship of such stupid forms, degrading as it evidently is to the rational nature of man; [*just*] as *you were led* by the artifice of your priests, who found their account in your delusions. And I hope, therefore, you will always remember, that the unmerited goodness of God in bestowing such gifts on persons who could pretend so little claim to them, lays you under a lasting obligation to use them in the most dutiful and grateful manner.

3 And therefore ^a I hope you will not allow yourselves to despise any of your brethren, on

1 COR. XII. 1.

NOW concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

3 Wherefore, I

^a *Therefore.*] The force of this particle *δὲ* seems to be this: I am careful to give you the following hints concerning *spiritual gifts*, because in proportion to the degree in which God hath magnified his grace in calling you from idola-

try to such extraordinary privileges and endowments, I am solicitous you may be preserved from abusing them, and engaged to improve them in the wisest and most faithful manner.

give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,

account of their deficiency in them; since there is an important sense in which they may all be said to have been enriched by divine and supernatural influences. For *I give you to know*, and desire you to admit and retain it as a principle equally certain and weighty, *that as no one speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed;*^b and consequently, all pretences made to the Divine Spirit by the Jews are notoriously false and detestable: so, on the other hand, *no one can sincerely say [that] Jesus [is the] Lord:*^c none can embrace his religion, and support the profession of it in truth, *but by the powerful operation of the Holy Ghost on his heart;* and therefore, as you are all in a sense spiritual, it would be highly unreasonable that the greatest should despise the least, on account of any distinction which may have been made in his favour, especially when you consider who is the great source of all. *Now there are diversities*⁴ *of gifts in different persons, but there is one and the same Divine Spirit, from whom they are all derived. And though there are diver-*⁵ *sities of administrations,*^d *there is one and the same common Lord, who appoints his ministers under their distinct offices, and gives them*

SECT.
XXIII.
1 Cor.
xii. 3.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

^b *Calleth Jesus accursed.*] Mr. Nathaniel Taylor (on Deism, p. 60, 61.) thinks this refers in general to the test put on Christians by their persecutors, that they should not only deny, but *blaspheme Christ*. This the Gentiles indeed required, (see Plin. Epist. x. 97. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. iv. 15.) But I rather think this refers to the Jews, who, while they uttered blasphemies against Christ themselves, (1 Tim. i. 13,) and extorted them, if possible, from those they apprehended to be his disciples, (Acts xxvi. 11,) pretended to the gifts of the Spirit, by which they undertook to cast out devils; and perhaps they might imitate some of the exorcisms which Christians under the operation of the Spirit performed. Such a caution might therefore be very useful. (Compare 1 John iv. 1—3, which seems nearly parallel to this passage.) Dr. Owen pertinently observes, that the Jews sometimes call Jesus ישו, instead of ישוע; concealing their blasphemy under the three initial letters of the words וְכַדוּ שְׁמוֹ, which signifies, *let his name*

and memory be blotted out; which is equivalent to *Anathema*, or *let him be accursed*, Owen on the Spir. p. 3.

^c *Sincerely say, [that] Jesus [is the] Lord.*] Chrysostom well observes, this phrase of *saying that Jesus is the Messiah*, must be supposed to proceed from *true faith* in him; and the expression is used to import a man's being a *true Christian*, because such strong temptations lay against professing Christ under this character, that they who maintained this doctrine were in heart real believers; though there might be a few excepted instances. This seems as plain a proof as could be desired, that *true faith* is the work of the Spirit of God upon the heart. The third Letter to the Author of Christianity not founded on Argument, p. 34—36.

^d *Diversities of administrations.*] Calling them *administrations*, or *services*, (διακονίαι,) was a gentle manner of reminding them of the great design of these *gifts*; and so of reproving those who perverted them to contrary purposes.

SECT. their powers, their ability, and their success.

XXIII. *And though there are diversities of operations and effects produced, yet it is one and the same God who worketh all these effects in all the persons concerned; and they can pretend to nothing more than being the subjects, or at most the instruments, of his almighty and universal agency.*

1 Cor.
xii. 6.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 *But to every one of his believing servants who are thus honoured, is given, according to his wise and holy distribution, a manifestation of the Spirit: (for that our portion of gifts may properly be called:) and this in such a degree as is most agreeable and profitable for the interest of the whole, that all may harmoniously carry on the great design of glorifying God, in the edification and happiness of the whole body.*

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 *For to one, for instance, who is placed in the highest rank of the Christian church, is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; a comprehensive view of that grand scheme in which the wisdom of God is so wonderfully displayed, that even angelic intelligences are continually admiring it: to another, by the same Spirit, such lower degrees of it as may be called the word of knowledge;^e whether respecting the meaning of the Old Testament, or other things in the Christian plan which may render them superior to most of their brethren, though inferior*

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

^e *Word of wisdom—and of knowledge.]*

There are, perhaps, few texts in the New Testament more difficult than some in this chapter, and in the ninth of this epistle, relating to the extraordinary gifts then in the church; which were at that time so well known as not to need explication; and it is a noble instance of the genuine simplicity and modesty of the apostle, that he did not expatiate on so grand a subject with any unnecessary parade. I think the late Lord Barrington, and after him Dr. Benson, have made it highly probable that the *word of wisdom* was that extensive plan of Christianity which was revealed to the apostles by the Holy Spirit. See Barring. Misc. Sacr. Essay i. p. 39—41. Bens. Propa. of Christianity, Vol. I. p. 40—46. But that the *word of knowledge* was, as they, after Dr. Whitby, assert, (Misc. Sacr. *ibid.* p. 42—45, and Bens. *ibid.* p. 46—48,) an extraordinary ability

to understand and explain the *Old Testament*, and especially its *prophecies*, I do not think equally apparent. Perhaps it might be a lower degree of the *word of wisdom*. See Mr. Chandler on Joel, p. 133—137. In confirmation of which opinion, it may be observed, that when *wisdom* and *knowledge* (חכמה ודעת,) are mentioned together, *wisdom* is generally put first, as most excellent. Compare Eccles. i. 16; chap. ii. 26; Isa. xxxiii. 6; chap. xlvii. 10; Col. ii. 3. And it is well known that the highest orders of teachers in Israel were called anciently חכמים, *wise men*. See Deut. i. 13; chap. xvi. 19; 1 Cor. i. 20. Mr. Saurin explains *knowledge* of a *discerning of mysteries*; such as the appearance of Christ to change the *saints* found alive, the re-establishment of the Jews, the man of sin, the beast, &c. Saur. Serm. Vol. VI. p. 13.

9 To another, faith, by the same Spirit; to another, the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit;

10 To another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues.

11 But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit,

to the class I mentioned above. *To another is given such an extraordinary faith,^f by the same Spirit, that he can commit himself to the Divine protection in the midst of the extremest dangers; and is thereby qualified courageously to assert the truth of the gospel, in the very face of its most violent persecutors: to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit, in consequence of which, while under its operation, he can by a word or a touch remove the most inveterate diseases. To another, the working of¹⁰ miracles^g of a different kind, such as taking up serpents, drinking any deadly draught unhurt, and especially the ejection of demons: to another, the gift of prophecy; whereby he shall be able exactly to foretel some contingent future event: to another, the discerning of spirits, so as authoritatively to determine by what impulse any one speaks, who pretends to inspiration; or to be capable of pronouncing on the sincerity of men's professions, or their fitness for any public work to be assigned to them: to another, the gift of speaking with [various] kinds of tongues, which he had never had the natural means of acquiring: and to another, the no less useful, though less splendid endowment, which we distinguish from the former, by calling it the interpretation of tongues;^h in consequence of which, a person shall be able to understand, and render into a known language, that which is spoken by a foreigner, in a tongue with which neither he himself nor the other hearers have been acquainted. But the one and the same¹¹ almighty Spirit worketh all these diversities of*

SECT.
XXIII.
1 Cor.
xii. 9.

^f Faith.] Faith, as an extraordinary gift, in this connexion, must in the general signify, "a firm persuasion of being called out by God, at any particular time, to perform some miracle, and accordingly going about it without any suspicion or fear, in confident dependence on a correspondent Divine interposition."

^g Working of miracles.] It is difficult to distinguish this from faith, as explained above. Some understand it of some very extraordinary miracles, such as taking up serpents, drinking any deadly draught unhurt, curing diseases by a sha-

dow passing over the patient, &c. Compare Mark xvi. 18; Acts v. 15. But I rather think, with Mons. Amyraut, (in his excellent paraphrase,) that *ἐνδυναμίζοντες* may refer to the dispossession of demons, or delivering persons over to them. This gift and that of healing, might be comprehended in faith; but perhaps, in some instances, it might work only in the one or the other of these effects.

^h To another, the gift of tongues—to another, the interpretation of tongues.] For the farther illustration of these clauses, and the interpretation here given, see the notes on chap. xiv. 28.

SECT. gifts, dividing unto every one severally as he dividing to every
XXIII. thinketh fit;ⁱ his wisdom fixes the scheme what man severally as he
will.

1 Cor.
xii. 11.

this variety should be; and his sovereign pleasure determines why they should be imparted to such and such particular persons, rather than

12 to others. The variety, I say, is wisely appointed: for as the body is one, and yet hath many members, but all the members of that one body, many as they are, constitute one body united in one well-regulated system; so also [is] Christ, that is, the whole society of which Christ is the head; and for the whole of which he may, as it

13 were, be put, being indeed all and in all. For by and according to the operation of one Spirit, we Christians are all baptized into one body, whether we be originally Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or freemen; the religion we before professed, whether true or false, the rank which we now hold in life, whether high or low, makes no difference as to the grand point; our union with the body is the same; and the same happy consequences follow from that union. And this in particular, that we are all made to drink into one Spirit;^k as we drink of the same sacramental cup, so we do by our communion with Christ, whose blood is represented by it, all imbibe the influences of the same Spirit, by which the divine life was at first produced, and

14 is continually preserved. I say, we have all imbibed it; as the whole body may be said to imbibe the wine which enters in at the mouth, and descends to the stomach; yet it is not intended for the benefit of those members alone, but of the whole; so, in like manner, the body is not one member, but many; yet so united, that the Spirit, imparted to one, is designed, whether in its miraculous operations or sanctifying influences, for the benefit of the whole.

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us thankfully acknowledge the Divine goodness, that we have not been led on, after the example of our Pagan ancestors,

ⁱ As he thinketh fit.] Βελεῖται does not so much express arbitrary pleasure, as a determination founded on wise counsel.

^k Drink into one Spirit.] Mr. Locke thinks St. Paul refers to the sacramental

cup rather than the bread here, because the wine is more spirituous, and in a lively manner represents the animating effects of Christ's blood, and the Spirit communicated by it.

to the vain worship of dumb and stupid idols; but have been taught from our infancy to adore the living Jehovah. May we, in the most solemn and consistent manner, say, That Jesus is the Lord! And while our actions speak a regard to him as such, may it appear that our hearts are under the influences of the Spirit of God, by which alone men are brought to that Divine temper.

SECT.
XXIII.
Ver. 2, 3.

Let us often reflect upon those glorious attestations which were given to the truth of our holy religion, by that diversity of gifts and operations with which its first teachers were furnished and adorned. Let us thankfully receive their testimony, and thereby set to our seal that God is true. And let a view to that great design in which all these wonderful things centre, engage us to study more an union of heart with all who in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In him Greeks and Barbarians, bound and free, are united. His glory therefore let all unanimously seek; and while his name is blasphemed by the ignorant and malignant, who cannot bear the purity of that religion which he teaches, may it so be defended by us, as at the same time to be exemplified and adorned.

SECT. XXIV.

The Apostle, farther to enforce that humility in the use of their spiritual gifts, and that mutual affection which the Corinthians so much needed to be farther taught, goes on, in prosecution of the allegory used above, to represent Christians as so united in one body as to have entirely the same interest; and insists on a tender care of the least member, from its subservience to the good of the whole. 1 Cor. xii. 15, to the end.

1 COR. XII. 15.

IF the foot shall say,
Because I am not
the hand, I am not

1 CORINTHIANS XII. 15.

IT is of the highest importance, in your present circumstances, for the honour of God, and your comfort and edification in the use of the gifts with which God hath endowed you, that I should farther illustrate and enforce the observation I have just been making, that the body is not one member, but made up of the conjunction of many, which have various offices and purposes. None can therefore complain of its own situation, as if it were insignificant; nor should any despise another, as unworthy of regard. As to the first of these, *if the foot should say, Because I am not the hand, but am placed in the lowest order, rest upon the ground, and*

SECT.
XXIV.
1 Cor.
xii. 15.

316 *It would be absurd for one member to usurp the place of the rest;*

SECT. am often covered with dirt, therefore *I am not* of the body; is it
XXIV. *of the body; is it indeed, for this, not any part* therefore not of the
of the body; or would it have reason to repre- body?

1 Cor.
xii. 16.

resent itself as on this account an outcast? *And if the ear should say, Because I am not so visible, so beautiful, so useful as the eye, therefore I am not of the body; is it indeed for this reason not of the body?* Is it not a very important and useful part? Yea, is not the body far more perfect, in consequence of the foot and the ear being what they respectively are, than it would be if each of them were another hand, or another

17 eye? For *if the whole body [were,] as it were, an eye,*^a and a man could look at will through every pore; *where [were] the hearing,* that important sense, which admits so much pleasing entertainment and improvement? *And if the whole [were] hearing, where [were] the smelling,* a sense which, though less important than the former, is not destitute of its proper delight

18 and its proper use? *But now we see that God, the great and wise Creator, hath placed the various members, every one of them in the body as he hath seen fit; and his inimitable contrivance, and overflowing goodness, is glorified in their*

19 variety and in their arrangement. *But if they all were one member, or the members all of one form and use, where [were] the body?* How could it possibly subsist? What a monstrous thing would such a detached member be, if it could be supposed to exist alone? Or if each member were to be transformed into that which might in itself seem most noble, how ruinous to the whole would such a transformation be?

20 *But now, as [there are] many members, there is in the union of them all, but one harmonious regular body, furnished for the various animal functions, and capable of a variety of sensations*

21 and actions. *And no one of them ought to despise any of the rest; for the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; since by the hand the body is maintained and fed, and the*

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need

^a *If the whole body [were] an eye, &c.]* The apostle by this intends probably to insinuate, that, were there no other gifts in the church but those which they so

much extolled in some of their teachers, it would be a very great disadvantage to the body.

of thee: nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

eye itself preserved and defended. And again, *the head*, elevated as it is, and so admirably furnished with all the nerves and organs planted in it, [cannot say] to the most distant and extreme parts, even *the feet*, mean as their form and office seems, *I have no need of you*; since by means of them, the head, and all the other parts of the body, are supported and removed from place to place.

SECT.
XXIV.
1 Cor.
xii. 21.

22 Nay, much more, those members of the body which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.

23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour, and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely parts have no need; but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

But it may farther be observed here, agree-22
ably to the point which I have now in view, that *the members of the body which appear to be weaker^b* than the rest, and perhaps are most delicate and tender in their structure, *are more abundantly necessary*, so that without them the animal functions can by no means be discharged. And so likewise with respect to those which²³
seem to be the more ignoble and dishonourable [parts^c] of the body, those we surround with more abundant honour;^d and those which seem our uncomely [parts,] have, by virtue of the dress we put upon them, *more abundant comeliness* than most of the rest. For our comely and graceful²⁴
[parts] have no need of being so adorned, as they appear to greater advantage uncovered: but God hath so tempered the several parts of the body together, as to give a more abundant honour to that which is so formed, as rather to appear deficient; for by making the meanest part thus necessary, he hath entitled it to the care of the noblest: That so there might be no schism²⁵
in the body, no division of separate interests; but [that] all the members might have the same care of each other, as being each an important

^b *Appear to be weaker.*] Some think this refers to the *brains* and *bowels*, which are very tender, and liable to many disorders. Others understand it of the least *muscular parts*, or *veins, arteries*, and other minute channels in the body, the least obstruction in which would be fatal. If more feeble be put for less noble, it suggests a very obvious and important sense, relating to the channels by which nature has provided for throwing off the dregs; which, dishonourable as they may seem, are so necessary, that if they be obstructed, intense torment and inevitable death must ensue.

^c *Our dishonourable parts, &c.*] It seems as if he had said, *the face*, on which the image of God is particularly stamped, we leave uncovered; but as for those parts which decency or custom teaches us to conceal, we contrive not only to cover, but also, as far as we conveniently can, to adorn by covering.

^d *We surround with more abundant honour:* τοις τιμην περισσώτεραν περιίθεμεν.] Our version by no means expresses the force of the Greek idiom here.

SECT. part of the whole. *So that if one member suffer,*
 XXIV. *all the members suffer with it,*^e and are concern-
 ed to remove the complaint; *or if one member*
 I Cor. be honoured and adorned, *all the members rejoice*
 xii. 26. *with it:* the ornament of one part being looked
 upon as that of the whole.

27 Now to apply this to the purpose for which
 I introduced it: *you are all the body of Christ,*
 28 *and members [each] in particular. And as God*
hath placed some members in more eminent sta-
tions in the body; so also some Christians in the
church. He hath placed in the first rank, apos-
ties; who are honoured with an office of the
highest distinction, and furnished with endow-
ments peculiar to themselves. In the second
place are ranked prophets; whose business it is
to foretel future events, or to speak by imme-
diatè inspiration, for the edification of the
church. In the third, teachers, of a more ordi-
nary kind, afterwards those who are endowed,
upon some particular occasion, with [miracu-
lous] powers; then the gifts of healing diseases
by anointing the sick with oil, and praying for
their recovery. Besides these, he has endowed
some with such extraordinary activity and saga-
city, as may fit them to be helpers in the ma-
nagement of charities; others are qualified by
their prudence to be governments,^f *by whose ad-*
vice the affairs of societies may be steered and
conducted in the safest and happiest manner:
there are also wonderful operations, by which
men are taught [different] kinds of tongues, which
they had never learned by any human methods.

26 And whether
 one member suffer,
 all the members suf-
 fer with it; or one
 member be honour-
 ed, all the members
 rejoice with it.

27 Now ye are the
 body of Christ, and
 members in parti-
 cular.

28 And God hath
 set some in the
 church, first apostles,
 secondarily prophets,
 thirdly teachers, af-
 ter that miracles,
 then gifts of healings,
 helps, governments,
 diversities of tongues.

^e *If one member suffer, &c.]* Bos, in
 his Exercitations on this text, has col-
 lected many parallel passages from
 Seneca and other heathen writers.

^f *Helpers—governments, &c.]* I think
 we can only guess at the meaning of these
 words; not having principles on which
 to proceed in fixing them absolutely. I
 have inserted what seemed to me most
 probable in the paraphrase. The au-
 thor of *Miscellanea Sacra* thinks much
 light is to be derived by comparing
 verses 8—10, with verses 28—38, the or-
 der in one text corresponding with that
 of the other; but the order of the same
 words differing in the two places, demon-

strates the contrary. I have met with
 no remark here, which seems more per-
 tinent than that of Mons. Amyraut; who
 thinks, that the same persons might
 possess many of these gifts, and sustain
 several of these characters, which were
 not stated distinct offices; and might
 be called helpers, in reference to their
 great dexterity and readiness to help
 those in distress; and governments, in
 regard to that genius for business, sa-
 gacity in judging the circumstances of
 affairs, and natural authority in the
 councils and resolutions of societies,
 which rendered them fit to preside on
 such occasions.

29 *Are* all apostles? *are* all prophets? *are* all teachers? *are* all workers of miracles?

Now as the offices of the church are different, the gifts by which men are fitted to discharge them are proportionably so. [*Are*] all the members or ministers of the church *apostles*? SECT. XXIV.

Yea, [*are*] all who are subordinate to them *prophets*? Or [*are*] all that sort of inferior teachers whom I observed to stand in the third class? [*Have*] all those [*miraculous*] powers which I have again and again mentioned? Or, to in- stance only in one of the lowest of them, *have* all the gifts of healing diseases in that extraordinary manner in which some have effected it?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

Yea, *do* all speak with tongues which they have never learned? Or *do* all others find themselves able to act in that lower sphere I spoke of before, and to *interpret* into their native language or any other, what has been uttered in a tongue to them generally unknown? These things are

31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way.

well worthy your consideration; *but* instead of attending to them, *ye contend earnestly about the best or most shining gifts*; ^h envying, and it may be, detracting from the superior endowments of others. *Yet I show you a way of the highest excellence*, to which it will be your greatest wisdom carefully to attend.

IMPROVEMENT.

THE wisdom and goodness of God, as displayed in the formation of the human body, is a subject that well deserves our attentive reflection and humble acknowledgment. All its several parts are useful to the whole; and the most noble cannot upbraid the meanest as an incumbrance. Each has reason to rejoice in its own situation, as well as in the addition of all the rest; and were the lowest placed higher than it is, it would become useless, burdensome, and monstrous. Ver. 18.

Let us acknowledge the same hand in the wise subordination appointed in civil societies and in the church of Christ. Let

^g *Are* all apostles? &c.] It appears that this invidious temper was not extirpated from among the Corinthians, even by this just and lively expostulation; for Clemens Romanus, writing to them many years after, complains of its continued prevalence, as leading them to neglect a due regard to those presbyters who were, according to divine direction, fixed among them, and to throw them out of their episcopal office. See Clem. Epistle to the Cor. sec. 44.

^h *Ye contend earnestly about the best gifts*, &c.] I doubt not but this is the just rendering of *ζηλοῦτε τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ κρείττονα*: for it seems contradictory to suppose that after the apostle had been showing them that these gifts were not at their own option, and that they ought not to emulate the gifts of each other, nor to aspire to superiority; he should in effect unsay all again, and give them such contrary advice.

SECT. none be discouraged at the low station wherein they are fixed,
XXIV. but rather let all acquiesce in the prudent and gracious disposal

— of the supreme Lord, and apply themselves to their proper functions. Let each member consider all the rest with pleasure, and rejoice with thankfulness in the health and vigour of the other parts, making the proper use of them, and communicating in return its proper services. If any be weak, let all strengthen it. If there be any blemish and imperfection in any part, let all
Ver. 23. the rest tenderly cover it, unless when a regard to the health and happiness of the whole requires that it should be laid open and searched in order to its being cured. And upon the whole, so far as we can prevent it, let there be no schism in the body.

25 Alas, that there should be so many breaches and contentions! Let us lament them; let each in his place endeavour to heal them; and unite in a sympathizing care of one another. So shall we best express our regard to our common Head; so shall we, in the remotest consequences, best consult our own interest and honour.

28 Blessed be God that he hath in his church given not only apostles and prophets, but also pastors and teachers! Adored be that bounty with which he has scattered down his gifts, whether ordinary or extraordinary, on the children of men. Let all be used, not to the purposes of ostentation, but of edification. And let us be desirous of those whereby we may bear most of the image of Christ, and may most promote the great design for which he visited this low world of ours, and was pleased to unite his church unto himself, and its several members to each other, in such dear and indissoluble bonds.

SECT. XXV.

To engage the Corinthians to cultivate charity as more excellent and important than any of those gifts about which they were so ready to contend, the apostle gives a most lively description of it; which he concludes with a reflection on its perpetual duration, in which it exceeds even the graces of faith and of hope. 1 Cor. xiii. throughout.

1 CORINTHIANS XIII. 1.

SECT. **I** HAVE been urging you to pursue something **T**
XXV. more excellent than any of those gifts about
— which some among you have been so ready
1 Cor. to contend; and I have recommended it as a
xiii. 1. more excellent way. That of which I speak is that incomparable and divine grace of Love, which indeed is not only of the highest excel-

1 COR. XIII. 1.

THOUGH I speak

with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

lence, but of absolute necessity. For if I were to speak with all the variety of tongues^a which are used among all the nations of men, and were capable of employing them even with the eloquence of angels, and knew their celestial dialect; but have not love^b to God and my fellow-creatures, be my strains of discourse ever so harmonious or ever so sublime, I am become but sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal,^c at best but like an instrument of music, and hardly worthy to be compared to an instrument of the nobler kind. So little delight would any of my most pompous performances give to God, or to any of his most valuable creatures, who should know that love was wanting, that I might as well think to recommend myself to acceptance by the noisy clank made by brazen instruments, in the worship of Isis or Cybele. And if, besides those gifts of tongues and eloquence, I have that of prophesying, so as to foretel the most distant and important future events; and know all these mysteries which have hitherto been concealed from the most penetrating and illuminated eyes; or have all the exactest knowledge of religion, or any other object that can be supposed the subject of my inquiries; and if, joined with this, I have all the most miraculous faith,^d by virtue of which I should be able to produce effects that might amaze the whole world, so as to remove mountains from their basis, to transport them from one part of the earth to another, and to change the whole face of nature with a word; but with all these wonderful endowments, have not love, simple as that

SECT. XXV.
1 Cor. xiii. 1.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing.

^a Speak with the tongues, &c.] Dr. Whitby shows, by a great many admirable quotations, both from Josephus and the Jewish rabbies, how much each of those things was regarded by the Jews which St. Paul here speaks of as absolutely of no avail without charity.

^b Have not love.] *Αγάπη* is not so properly rendered charity. It must here be taken in the noblest sense, for such a love to the whole church and the whole world as arises from principles of true piety, and ultimately centres in God.

^c Tinkling cymbal.] Mr. Locke very justly remarks, that as a cymbal was

made of two pieces of hollow brass, which being struck together made a tinkling, with very little variety of sound; St. Paul chose to instance in this, rather than in a harp, or flute, or any other more harmonious instrument of music. See Commentar. de Cymbalis, at the end of Fortuita Sacra.

^d Most miraculous faith.] As it is here supposed that this faith might in fact be separated from love; it cannot signify the same as in the epistle to the Romans, where it is such an assent to a Divine declaration as produces a suitable temper and conduct.

SECT. principle is, and comparatively mean as it may
XXV. be esteemed, yet for want of it *I am nothing*^e

— in the sight of God, and have in reality no true
-1 Cor. worth and excellence. And I may farther add,
xiii. 3. that no external act of charity, or of zeal, will
signify any thing, if this inward principle,
which should be the life of all, be wanting;
for if *I distribute all my goods in alms* for the
sustenance of the poor, and *deliver up my body to
be burnt* in defence of religion itself, and do it
from a secret desire of human applause, and
ostentation of charity or of piety; but have
not in the sight of God that love to which I
make so high a pretence, *I shall receive no ad-
vantage by it*; but in the day of final account,
my Judge, instead of applauding and rewarding
me as a saint and a martyr, will condemn me
as a wicked and vain-glorious hypocrite.

4 Indeed the properties of this love which I
am now recommending are such, that one would
imagine the description of them should be
enough to charm the whole world to pursue it.
Sufficiently must that show how happy it renders
the soul which is under its influence, as well as
how amiable such must be both to God and
man. For *love suffereth long* injuries [and] pro-
vocations, without being transported into rage,
or instigated to revenge. On the contrary, un-
der all this ill-usage it is gentle and kind. *Love
envieth not* the advantages which others enjoy;
but rather takes pleasure in them, and by friendly
participation makes them its own. *Love is not
insolent* and over-bearing,^f does not act with
such precipitancy and rashness as pride and ill-
nature often hurry men into; but engages us
with tenderness to look round on those about us,
lest we should by any means harm them before
we are aware. *Love is not presently puffed up*
with arrogant self-conceit, on account of any

3 And though I be-
stow all my goods to
feed the poor, and
though I give my bo-
dy to be burned, and
have no charity, it
profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth
long, and is kind;
charity envieth not;
charity vaunteth not
itself, is not puffed
up:

^e *I am nothing.*] A person so eminently
favoured by God as this description
supposes, yet destitute of true piety
and benevolence, must be very con-
temptible, and justly odious.

^f *Is not insolent, &c.*] The Greek word
μεγαλειοσύνη, from whence the verb here
used is derived, signifies *rash and incon-*

siderate: so that the word must here im-
port, "one that acts with such precipi-
tancy and inconsideration as pride and
"ill-nature often hurry people into,"
which charity would preserve them from,
and induce that tenderness and caution
which engages us to look about us, that we
may do ourselves and others no harm,

5 Doth not behave
itself unseemly, seek-
eth not her own, is
not easily provoked,
thinketh no evil.

6 Rejoiceth not in
iniquity, but rejoic-
eth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things,
believeth all things,
hopeth all things,
endureth all things.

distinguished station or peculiar endowment which a man may possess; not outwardly boast-eth of these things, or inwardly overvalueth it-
self upon them. Love *doth not behave indecently,*^g
in a manner unbecoming a person's station,
age, or circumstances. Love *seeketh not her own*
things, but makes all reasonable concessions in
any point of self-interest, where any superior
interest of others is concerned. Love *is not ex-*
asperated, and thrown into bitter and implacable
resentments, even where the usage it meets
with is most apparently unjust; and where the
intention is dubious, it *imputeth not evil*; but
puts the kindest construction upon the action it-
self, or the principle from whence it proceeds,
which the nature of circumstances may by any
means allow. Love *rejoiceth not at iniquity*; 6
it takes no pleasure to see an adversary fall in-
to a crime by which his reputation should be
blasted and his interest ruined; *but*, on the con-
trary, it *rejoiceth with others in the truth*, and is
pleased when its greatest enemies behave them-
selves in a manner agreeable to the word of God
and the reason of things. Far from delighting 7
to blaze abroad the faults of others, it *covereth*
all things that are amiss, so far as it can lawfully
conceal them; all which benevolence to the
public, or kindness to an individual, does not
require them to make known. It is not apt to
suspect the integrity and veracity of others; but
rather, knowing itself to be sincere, *believeth all*
things, so far as with the most candid allowances
it rationally can; and where it is constrained to
confess that many things are wrong, it is un-
willing to treat the worst of mankind as utterly
incorrigible; but *hopeth all things*, and with
that hope supports itself in every kind effort it
can make for their recovery; and as it is long-
suffering with regard to human provocations, so
from the hand of God it *endureth all things*,

SECT.
XXV.

1 Cor.
xiii. 5.

[Does not behave indecently.] I cannot
read this passage without thinking of the
venerable Mr. Hale's story of the lancet
concealed in a sponge, in order to open
an imposthumated part, without giving
any alarm to the patient, who dreaded
the operation. There is great reason to

believe, that in all this description the
apostle had in his mind that contrast to
this beautiful character which was so
prevalent among the Corinthians, as is
evident from many passages in both these
epistles.

SECT. even the most sharp and heavy afflictions, ac-
 XXV. quiescing in his will, trusting in his care, and
 rejoicing if its own sufferings may be a means
 of consolation and edification to others.

1 Cor.
 xiii. 7.

8 And farther to recommend this excellent principle of *love*, give me leave to observe, that it is a grace which *never faileth*, but will accompany and adorn us to all eternity, and indeed makes a very essential part of our preparation for the heavenly world; in which it hath an apparent advantage over many of those gifts which some are so ready to emulate and pursue, to the neglect and injury of love. *But whether* men admire *prophecies*, it is fit *they* should know they *shall be abolished*, when the faith of God's people shall no longer need to be encouraged, nor their devotion to be assisted, by such exhortations and instructions as are necessary now: *or whether* they boast themselves of the variety of *tongues*, they *shall cease* in those celestial regions; one speech and one language shall prevail among all the blessed inhabitants, and the languages of earth be forgotten, as too low and imperfect. Yea I may add, that a great deal of that *knowledge* which we now pursue with the greatest eagerness, and which is very conducive to our present usefulness among mankind, *shall then be abolished*^b and superseded, as referring to things altogether antiquated and passed away, or swallowed up in discoveries so much clearer, stronger, and more important, that it shall appear, in comparison of them, as nothing. *For now we know but in part, and we prophesy but in part*; there is a great deal of obvious imperfection attending all our knowledge, and all the services we can here perform for God and for his church:

10 *But when that which is perfect is come*, as in the heavenly state it shall, then *that [which is]* only *in part shall be abolished*: all these slow and un-

8 Charity never faileth: but whether *there be prophecies*, they shall fail; whether *there be tongues*, they shall cease; whether *there be knowledge*, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

^b *Knowledge shall be abolished.*] This cannot refer to all kind of knowledge; for the noblest shall be much improved. Some think it here signifies that of *Old Testament mysteries*, which will be superseded in that world where scripture shall be of no farther use; and hence some have farther argued for that interpretation of the word of *knowledge* which was

spoken of above, (chap. xii. 8.) But the explication given in the paraphrase seems more natural and unexceptionable. To trace the gradual openings of the Christian scheme through the various dispensations of God to the church, may be an important part of the celestial happiness.

satisfactory methods of obtaining knowledge, and all the little stock we have here laid up, shall be exchanged for the most extensive views of whatever it can be desirable to know, opening upon the mind in the most easy, clear, and delightful manner.

SECT.

XXV.

1 Cor.
xiii. 10.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

It shall indeed be like a state of adult age, 11 when compared with that of feeble infancy.

Just as *when I was a child, I spake as a child* would naturally do, a few imperfect words, hardly at first articulate and intelligible, and often in themselves unmeaning; *I was affected as a child*, thrown into transports of joy or grief on trifling occasions, which manly reason soon taught me to despise; *I reasoned as a child*, in a weak, inconclusive, and sometimes ridiculous manner. *But when* my faculties ripened and *I became a man, I put away the things of the child*, and felt sentiments, and engaged in pursuits, correspondent to such advancement of age and

12 For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know, even as also I am known.

reason. Such shall be the improvements of the 12 heavenly state, in comparison with those which the most eminent Christian can attain here.

For we now see the most noble objects of our intellectual view *in an ambiguous and obscure manner, as we discern distant objects by means of a glass or mirror,*¹ which reflects only their imperfect forms, so that (as when riddles are proposed to us,) our understandings are often confounded with the uncertain and indeterminate appearances of things. *But then* we shall see, not the faint reflection, but the objects themselves, *face to face*, in as distinct a manner as we could wish. *Now I know [but] in part*, and though the light of an immediate revelation from heaven has been imparted to me in many instances, and in an extraordinary manner, I am sensible how great a part is still kept under the veil. *But then* it shall be taken off, and *I shall know even as also I am known*, in an intuitive and comprehensive manner; so that my

¹ *By means of a mirror.*] This is the exact rendering of δι' ὀπίσθου. It is well known that the use of dioptric glasses in telescopes, did not prevail till many ages after the date of this epistle. And

the Seventy use this word for the women's looking-glasses, or mirrors of metal, out of which Moses made the laver. Exod. xxxviii. 8.

SECT. knowledge shall bear some fair resemblance to
 XXV. that of the Divine Being, which, while our
 — notices of things hover about their surface, pe-
 1 Cor. netrates to the very centre of every object, and
 xiii. 12. sees through my soul, and all things, as at one
 single glance.

13 And thus upon the whole it appears, and I hope you will remember and consider it; that *there now abide these three* most excellent graces, *faith, hope, and love*; each of them far to be preferred to the most shining gifts about which you can contend. *But the greatest of these graces [is] love*; which most directly transforms us into the image of God, and which shall continue to exert all its influence, when faith is superseded by sight, and hope by enjoyment.

13 And now abided faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

IMPROVEMENT.

SURELY after having attentively surveyed the beautiful description which the apostle gives us of this divine grace, love, it cannot be necessary that its cause should be farther pleaded. It speaks for itself; speaks to our very hearts. But O, who that enters into the description must not mourn, that its angelic form is so much a stranger to multitudes who bear the Christian name! So that in many instances it can hardly pass uncensured; while those extremes which most evidently violate it, are often consecrated under honourable names, and men build much of their hopes of heaven on breathing what is indeed the temper of hell. How many that style themselves Christians, can endure no provocations, can cover no faults of their brethren, can keep themselves within no bounds, can believe nothing to their advantage, against whom, on party-principles, they have entertained prejudices! They vaunt themselves, they are puffed up with the conceit of their own wisdom, they behave unseemly, they seek only their own reputation and profit, they believe the worst they can hear of others, and suspect more than they hear; they envy those whose endowments and stations are superior to their own, and instead of labouring themselves to excel, they affect by calumny and slander to bring down their brethren to their own level, or rather as far as possible below it. Alas, that the dictates of our Divine Master, and the genius of our religion, are so little understood, are no more regarded! and that we so entirely forget the precepts of Christianity, as not to remember even those of common humanity!

Ver.
4, &c.

Yet surely if these precepts are wholly forgotten, it is in vain SECT.
that we remember or contend for any of its doctrines and prin- XXV.
ciples. As all languages and gifts, so all knowledge and faith
is vain, if it be separate from love, by which true faith always
operates.

Let us cultivate love more and more, and so much the rather Ver.
as it is a plant of the celestial paradise; which will there for 1, 2
ever flourish, when tongues shall cease, and that knowledge on 8, 10
which men value themselves highly shall utterly vanish. The
ripeness of adult age, and the knowledge of the most improved
sciences, human or divine, is but as the trifling of an infant, 11
when compared with that manly and perfect state after which 12
we are aspiring. The dim mirror of faith shall then be laid
aside; and the truth of the objects now so imperfectly discern-
ed, shall in full lustre be presented to our eye, purged from
every film, and strengthened for a brightness which would now
overwhelm it. In the mean time, attending humbly to the
narrow limits and necessary obscurity of our present knowledge,
let us not be puffed up in ourselves, let us not despise others;
but by a modest estimate and a faithful improvement of such
degrees of light as God shall be pleased to afford us, let us press
on towards the regions of eternal day; where in his light we
shall see light, and where, amidst the fullest communications of
his love, we shall for ever love him and each other, with ar-
dours which the best hearts, in their best moments on earth,
can neither attain nor conceive.

SECT. XXVI.

*The Apostle cautions the Corinthians against that vain ostentation of the
gift of tongues which was so prevalent among them; and reasons with
them concerning the absurdity of the manner in which that gift was
abused by some of them. 1 Cor. xiv. 1—19.*

1 COR. XIV. 1.

1 CORINTHIANS XIV. 1.

FOLLOW after cha- SECT.
rity, and desire **I** HAVE exhorted, and I would still exhort XXVI.
you, my brethren, to pursue love,^a to cultivate
it to the utmost of your power in your own
breasts and in all around you, not grudging
any labour necessary to promote so excellent a 1 Cor.
xiv. 1.

^a Pursue love.] The word διώκετε properly signifies, “to pursue with an eagerness like that with which hunters “follow their game.” And it may be intended to intimate how hard it is to obtain and preserve such a truly bene-

volent spirit in the main series of life; considering, on the one hand, how many provocations we are like to meet with, and on the other, the force of self-love, which will in so many instances be ready to break in upon it.

SECT. cause. Yet I would not lead you to slight any spiritual gifts, but
XXVI. inferior endowment by which the edification of rather that ye may
the church may be promoted. I permit you, prophesy.

1 Cor.
xiv. 1.

therefore, zealously to *desire spiritual [gifts,]* so far as submission to God, the great Dispenser of them, and love to your brethren, may admit. *But I would especially urge you to desire and pray that ye may be enabled to prophesy, in that sense of the word in which we commonly use it, to express the gift whereby we are enabled to explain scripture, and publicly to discourse of Divine things in an instructive and edifying manner; for by this you may hope to do the*

2 greatest good. *For he that speaketh in a tongue^b unknown to the auditory to whom he addresses himself, speaks in effect not to men, but to God; for no one else present understands [him;] and as God alone knows the truth and importance of what he says, so it is all lost on the audience, though in the Spirit he speak the most sublime*

3 *mysteries. Whereas he that prophesieth, in the sense in which I now use the word, that is, discourses of Divine things in a known language, speaketh to men, and affords them edification, and exhortation and comfort, according to the particular tenor and contents of what he says.*

4 *And thus, on the most favourable concessions that can be made, he that speaketh with a tongue edifies himself^c only, if peradventure his own good affections may be awakened by the truth he fervently delivers; and the consciousness of that miraculous power which he feels working in him, may farther establish his faith in Christianity; but he that prophesies, while he has a share of this advantage, edifies the church also,*

2 For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the Spirit he speaketh mysteries.

3 But he that prophesieth, speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation and comfort.

4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue, edifieth himself: but he that prophesieth, edifieth the church.

^b *He that speaketh in a tongue unknown, &c.]* Dr. Whitby thinks that the gifts of languages and prophecy were always to be found in the same person; but that the first was permanent, the other transient. Yet it seems to me very conceivable, either might be without the other. The miraculous instamping, as it were, on a man's mind a new language, would enable him to speak all he knew in it; but his fitness to discourse in public; as well as his capacity of predicting future events, were matters quite of another nature.

^c *Edifieth himself.]* After all that is

said in the paraphrase to prove that this might be possible, it was much more probable that a man might be hurt than edified by the exercise of this gift, when attended with such ostentatious circumstances. But the apostle, according to that happy address for which he was so remarkable, makes his supposition most honourable and favourable to the person reproved; as Hector ascribes the retreat of Paris from the battle, to resentment against the Trojans rather than to cowardice. Hom. Iliad. lib. vi. ver. 326; and Eustaph. in loc.

5 I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth, than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?

by taking those methods which are most likely to promote the number of its converts, and to do good to those who are already gathered into it.

For my own part, far from envying any of your gifts, I wish them increased, and indeed that ye all spake with tongues, in as great a variety as I myself can, or as God hath imparted the gift to any man living: but on the whole, I had much rather that ye might all prophesy; for when we come to consider the different effects and tendencies of these different gifts, we must own that, with respect to the prospects of usefulness, by which these things are much to be estimated, he that prophesieth [is] greater than he who speaketh with tongues,^d which the auditory cannot understand, except he interpret what he says, that the church may receive edification: and even then, his speaking with an unintelligible tongue is but an unnecessary incumbrance, which it would be much more modest and prudent to omit.

Now, as perhaps you will apprehend this better by an example, suppose it were your own case, brethren: if I came to you, the next time I make you a visit at Corinth, speaking to you with a variety of unknown tongues, what shall I profit you, who are supposed not to understand me, unless I speak not merely in your hearing, but to you, that is, in a language with which you are acquainted? Else all is absolutely lost, whatever my message may be, whether I speak by the revelation of some gospel doctrine and mystery, or by knowledge^e in the explication of some controverted text in the Old Testament, or by prophecy in the prediction of some future

^d He that prophesieth, &c.] How happily does the apostle teach us to estimate the value of gifts and talents, not by their brilliancy, but usefulness. Speaking with tongues was indeed very serviceable for spreading the gospel abroad; but for those who staid at home, it was much more desirable to be able to discourse well on useful subjects in their own language; which might serve more for the improvement of the society they belonged to, and the conviction of such

of their unbelieving neighbours as might out of curiosity happen to step into their assemblies. Compare verses 23—25.

^e Revelation or knowledge, &c.] I am not certain how far different ideas are to be affixed to each of these words; or supposing that, how far these are the appropriate ideas intended by each; but I could think of no more proper explication; and must number this among the many texts which I dare not pretend fully to understand.

SECT.
XXVI.
1 Cor.
xiv. 5.

SECT. event, or by doctrine for the regulation of life
XXVI. and manners.

1 Cor.
xiv. 7.

So also inanimate things which give a sound, whether it be pipe or harp, or any other instrument of music, unless they give a due distinction in the variety of sounds proceeding from them, how can it be known what is piped or harped? How should dancers be directed by music, unless the proper tone and modulation be duly maintained? Moreover, in war, if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, so that there is an undistinguishable mixture of various kinds of notes, who should prepare himself to battle? Could soldiers know when to advance or when to retreat, unless the trumpet's sound be adjusted and constantly adhered to? So likewise in your religious assemblies, unless ye utter by the tongue significant words, to which the ear of your auditory are accustomed, how shall it be known what you speak? For ye shall be in that case as those that speak to the air, or make a mere inarticulate noise; and I leave you to judge how absurd it would be to bring such unmeaning sounds into the worship of God, as ye would not endure in the common affairs of life.

10 *There may be ever so many sorts of language in the world, perhaps as many as there are persons in your most numerous assemblies; and none of them is without its proper signification among those that use it; there are great numbers that inhabit the same region who perfectly understand it. Yet unless I know the proper force and import of the particular language which is used in my hearing, no one can converse with me, and I shall in vain ask an explication in my own; for I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh [shall be] a barbarian to me; and if the language be ever so copious, harmonious, expressive and polite, I shall hardly be able to distinguish it from that of the most unpolished savage. So that, on the whole, I must urge it upon you also, that seeing ye desire spiritual [gifts,] and are ready to vie with each other in the excellence of them, ye seek to abound [in them] for the edification of the church, and not merely for your*

7 And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?

8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.

11 Therefore, if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian; and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.

12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

own honour according to those rules of honour which you may too rashly lay down to yourselves. SECT. XXVI.

13 Wherefore, let him that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue, pray that he may interpret.

Therefore let him that speaketh in a tongue generally unknown to the congregation to which he would address himself, pray that he may be able rather to interpret the discourse of another, than to amuse, or indeed amaze and weary, the audience, by the ostentatious exercise of the gift he has already received, and with which he is fond of making a vain parade. For if I pray 1 Cor. xiv. 13.

14 For *if* I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

in a strange and unknown tongue, without making use of any explication, my spirit indeed prays, and I may have true devotion of heart towards God, as I understand the language myself; but my understanding is in this respect unfruitful as to others,^f and I perform an action void of that prudence and good sense which ought always to govern in my addresses to God, and act so childish and foolish a part, that the reason of a man may seem at that time to have deserted me. What then is [my duty] in these circumstances? Truly it is plain enough; it requires me to say, I will pray with the spirit, exercising the faculties of my own soul in devotion; but I will pray with the understanding also.^g I will sing the praises of God with the spirit; but I will sing them with understanding also, and will take great care to mingle no foolish trifling action, unworthy the dignity of a rational creature, with my prayers or songs of praise. And it becomes you especially to consider this, who are so proud of your own wisdom, and yet in some respects act so foolish a part.

15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

^f *Understanding unfruitful to others.] This I think a more natural interpretation than that which supposes the apostle to suggest a thought which the Papists urge to palliate the absurdity of prayers in an unknown tongue, namely, "There may be some general good affections working, where the person praying does not particularly understand what he says." But this would make it almost impossible to conceive how the gift of tongues could be abused, if the person exercising it was under such an extraordinary impulse of the Spirit as to utter sensible words which he did not himself understand; in which case a man*

must be, in the most extraordinary sense that can be conceived, the mere organ of the Holy Ghost himself.
^g *Pray with understanding.] Mr. Locke and most other commentators seem here to have lost the sense and high spirit of the apostle in this clause, when they explain *εὐ νοῦ* as if it merely signified a manner intelligible to others. I apprehend it is designed farther to intimate what a want of manly sense and right understanding it must betray, to talk in a language the hearers could not take in, how sublime soever the discourse might be. This the 20th verse, and especially the use of *τελειοι* there, strongly suggests.*

- SECT. *Moreover, whoever thou art who actest in*
 XXVI. *this ostentatious manner, consider a little, for*
 1 Cor. *the farther illustration of this argument, the*
 xiv. 16. *situation of one of thine own hearers. If thou*
givest thanks, for instance, in the spirit, in the
manner that we now suppose it to be done, that
is, in an unknown tongue, how shall he that fill-
eth up a private place, and should join with thee
in thy devotion, say Amen to thy thanksgiving,
seeing he knows not what thou sayest? You
know it is customary for the audience to pro-
nounce their Amen: now it seems a very absurd,
not to say hazardous thing, for people to tes-
tify in such a public and solemn manner their
consent to, and concurrence with, they know
 17 *not what. For we will grant that thou indeed*
givest thanks well, and that there is nothing im-
proper either in the sentiments or expressions,
if they were understood; nevertheless the other
is not at all edified or improved, in order to
which it is absolutely necessary that he should
know what is said.
- 18 *For my own part, I thank my God, and de-*
sire to mention it entirely to the glory of that
blessed Being from whom all my gifts and tal-
ents are derived, that I speak with tongues more
than you all, even the whole society taken toge-
ther, and am distinguished from my other bre-
thren in this endowment, in proportion to the
more extensive commission which I have receiv-
ed to bring a variety of nations to the know-
ledge of the gospel, and persuade them to em-
 19 *brace it. But in a Christian church, when as-*
sembled with them for the purposes of public
devotion, I had rather speak five plain words
with my understanding in a rational manner,
that I might teach others also, and promote the
edification of those who were joining with me,
than ten thousand of the most pompous and ele-
gant words in an [unknown] tongue, though ut-
tered with the greatest readiness, and expressing
conceptions ever so excellent; yet I had ra-
ther be entirely silent in an assembly, than take
up their time, and prostitute the extraordinary
gifts of God to such vain and foolish pur-
poses. And I heartily wish I may be able to
bring you to the same reasonable way of think-
- 16 *Else when thou*
shall bless with the
spirit, how shall he
that occupieth the
room of the unlearn-
ed, say Amen at thy
giving of thanks,
seeing he under-
standeth not what
thou sayest?
- 17 *For thou verily*
givest thanks well,
but the other is not
edified.
- 18 *I thank my*
God, I speak with
tongues more than
you all.
- 19 *Yet in the*
church I had rather
speak five words with
my understanding,
that by my voice I
might teach others
also, than ten thou-
sand words in an
unknown tongue.

ing ; which would be much to the credit of your own understanding, as well as of your Christian profession. SECT. XXVI.

IMPROVEMENT.

How weak and poor a thing is pride and ostentation, and how wise and honourable charity and humility ! Who that has a right discernment would not rather have been the obscurest Christian, that now, almost unseen, joins our assemblies, and, in heart at least, humbly puts his amen to the petitions presented there, than the most fluent talker at Corinth ; abusing the special gifts of the Spirit, and trifling away, in an unseasonable display of his own then unprofitable endowments, the precious moments which were destined to the highest purposes of religious edification ! Who must not lament to see pride and vain-glory so early insinuating themselves into Christian societies ! Who must not, from so sad an instance, learn to be greatly watchful over their own hearts, on a side where they are subject to such dangerous attacks ! Ver. 2—12

Had the most able and zealous Protestant divine endeavoured to expose the absurdity of praying in an unknown tongue, as practised in the church of Rome, it is difficult to imagine what he could have written more fully to the purpose than the apostle hath here done. And when it is considered how perversely the Papists retain the usage of such prayers, it will seem no wonder they should keep the scriptures in an unknown tongue too. But they proclaim at the same time their superstition and idolatry in so universal a language, that even a barbarian might perceive and learn it in their assemblies. Let us pity and pray for them, that God may give their prejudiced minds a juster and happier turn. And since we see the unreasonable and pernicious humour of immutably adhering to ancient customs, prevailing to maintain in the church of Rome so flagrant an absurdity as praying in an unknown tongue, let it teach us to guard against every degree of the like disposition ; and not so much consider what hath been the practice of any church in which we were educated, or have chosen to worship, as what the reason of things, and the authority of scripture, concur to dictate. 13—16

Of this wise and benevolent apostle let us learn to estimate the value of gifts by their usefulness, and to seek above all things the edification of our brethren ; especially if we are providentially called to minister in public. There is perhaps a manner of speaking in an unknown tongue, even when the language of our own country is used ; a height of composition, an abstruseness of thought, an obscurity of phrase, which common Christians cannot understand. Let not the ministers of the 18, 19
3, 4

SECT. humble Jesus seek such high things; but in this important
 XXVI. sense of the exhortation condescend to men of low estate. If
 — the ignorant may be instructed, if the careless may be con-
 vinced, if the vicious may be reformed, if the devotion of our
 Christian brethren may be excited, their love to each other
 cherished, and their holy resolutions confirmed, the great ends
 of divine ordinances are answered; and that plainness of
 speech which may be most likely to promote them, is rather
 the glory than reproach of the Christian orator.

SECT. XXVII.

*St. Paul gives proper advices for preventing that abuse of the gift of
 tongues which he had been reproofing in the preceding section. 1 Cor.
 xiv. 20, to the end.*

1 CORINTHIANS XIV. 20.

SECT.
 XXVII.

1 Cor.
 xiv. 20.

MY brethren, permit me to be the happy
 means of forming you to a more noble
 and manly way of thinking, with respect to
 these spiritual gifts which are the occasions of
 so many unbecoming emulations among you.
 Do you desire to be distinguished in the church?
 distinguish yourselves by solid wisdom; and *be
 not*, as this ostentation of tongues would show
 you to be, *children in understanding*; ^a *but in
 malice*, indeed, *be* as much as possible like *little
 infants*; have all the gentleness, sweetness and
 innocence of their tender age: *but*, as ye have
 arrived to years of maturity, *in understanding
 be perfect* [men;] for that religion which the
 gospel hath now taught you, far from impair-
 ing any of the natural faculties, rather exalts and
 improves them, and directs them to the highest
 21 and noblest use. To return to the subject we
 were upon: you know *it is written in the law*,
 that is, in the Old Testament, (Isa. xxviii. 11,
 12, where God had been complaining of the un-
 teachable disposition of the Jews,) “*Surely in*

1 COR. XIV. 20.

BRETHREN, be
 not children in
 understanding: how-
 beit, in malice be
 ye children, but in
 understanding be
 men.

21 In the law it is
 written, With men of

^aChildren in understanding.] This is an
 admirable stroke of true oratory, adapt-
 ed to strike and bring down the height
 of their spirits, by representing those
 things in which they were most ready
 to pride themselves, as comparatively
 childish.—The word *νηπιος* refers to

infants, and is not sufficiently expressed
 by the word *children*, for they are some-
 times vain and sometimes malicious
 too.—*Τελειος* signifies *full-grown men*;
 intimating it was a kind of *boyishness*, if
 I may be allowed to use that word, to
 emulate and quarrel with one another.

other tongues and other lips, will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. *foreign language,^b and with foreign lips, I will speak unto this people; and even so they will not hear me, saith the Lord;* which may be considered and interpreted as an intimation of the purpose God had of sending one last message to them, by his servants endued with the gift of tongues. *So that, according to this intimation, tongues are a sign not to believers, but to infidels.* The gift was intended to propagate the gospel among those who were strangers to it, not to edify those that had already believed. *Whereas, on the contrary, prophecy [is] designed, not for infidels, but believers, to edify churches already gathered; in which respect it is nobler, and more worthy your pursuit.* But *as there is a manner of using this gift of tongues, which would even pervert the original end for which it was given, and obstruct rather than promote the conversion of infidels, I must observe, therefore, that if the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with a variety of unknown tongues, and any of the uninstructed, or, in other words, the infidels, come in, when they hear such a confused jargon as this must be, will they not presently say that you are distracted, and adopt the censure which was at first so rashly passed in the day of Pentecost, that these men are full of new wine? (Acts ii. 13.) Whereas if all prophesy, and an ignorant or* *ignorant man, (for I esteem every one ignorant who is uninstructed in the great mysteries of the gospel, whatever else he may know,) comes in, he is convicted by all who thus speak; he is judged by all; every one says something to which his conscience bears witness: And so the secrets of his heart are made manifest,^c in a manner to*

SECT.
XXVII.
1 Cor.
xiv. 21.

22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say, that ye are mad?

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made mani-

22 *So that, according to this intimation, tongues are a sign not to believers, but to infidels.* The gift was intended to propagate the gospel among those who were strangers to it, not to edify those that had already believed. *Whereas, on the contrary, prophecy [is] designed, not for infidels, but believers, to edify churches already gathered; in which respect it is nobler, and more worthy your pursuit.* But *as there is a manner of using this gift of tongues, which would even pervert the original end for which it was given, and obstruct rather than promote the conversion of infidels, I must observe, therefore, that if the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with a variety of unknown tongues, and any of the uninstructed, or, in other words, the infidels, come in, when they hear such a confused jargon as this must be, will they not presently say that you are distracted, and adopt the censure which was at first so rashly passed in the day of Pentecost, that these men are full of new wine? (Acts ii. 13.) Whereas if all prophesy, and an ignorant or* *ignorant man, (for I esteem every one ignorant who is uninstructed in the great mysteries of the gospel, whatever else he may know,) comes in, he is convicted by all who thus speak; he is judged by all; every one says something to which his conscience bears witness: And so the secrets of his heart are made manifest,^c in a manner to*

^b *In foreign language, &c.]* Most critics refer these words, as they stand in Isaiah, to the Babylonians, who should come and speak to the Jews in a language unintelligible to them; in which sense the phrase is used elsewhere, Deut. xxviii. 49; Jer. v. 15. Diodati thinks the meaning is, "Because they would not attend to plain messages, God would speak to them by such as they could not understand:" and then the apostle's argument will be, "Since God threatens

"this as a curse, do not voluntarily bring it upon the church, merely to make ostentation of your own gifts." But perhaps the apostle in this application intends to give us the true though not most obvious interpretation of the words.

^c *Secrets of his heart are made manifest.]* It is very possible that (as in the known cases of Nathaniel, and the woman of Samaria, John i. 47; chap. iv. 18.) some secret facts, relating to a stranger, might in some instances be revealed to the pro-

SECT.
XXVII.

1 Cor.
xiv. 25.

him very surprising and unaccountable; inso-
much that sometimes a person who comes into
your assembly out of mere curiosity, or possibly
with some ill design, is not able to command
himself under the impression which the word of
God thus spoken makes upon him; and so, un-
der the power of it, *falling down upon [his] face,*
he will worship that one living and true God
whom you adore; declaring that this ever-bless-
ed God is indeed among you: and perhaps, im-
mediately professing on that account his reso-
lution of joining himself to you; and proclaim-
ing afterwards wherever he comes, in what an
extraordinary manner he has met with the di-
vine presence, and what a wonderful impression
hath been made upon his mind. Now surely,
that degree of honour which is brought to God
and his gospel by one such effect of prophesy-
ing, should appear far more desirable to you
than any applause or admiration which you can
receive from your fellow-Christians by the exer-
cise of your most splendid gifts.

- 26 I might also urge upon this head, the great
disorder which is introduced into your assem-
blies by this ostentatious manner of proceeding;
for indeed, if you think seriously, *what a shock-*
ing thing is it, my brethren, that when you come
together for the purposes of social worship, in
which all hearts should unite, each of you is de-
sirous himself to officiate publicly, in such a
manner as best suits his present inclination, with-
out any regard to decency and order? *Every one*
of you hath a psalm to read, hath a doctrine to
inculcate, hath a tongue in which to preach or
pray, hath a revelation of some mystery to pro-
duce, hath an interpretation, which perhaps he
immediately begins, while the person from
whom he is to interpret hath but begun to
speak, and thus five or six,^d if not more, may

fest: and so falling
down on *his* face, he
will worship God,
and report that God
is in you of a truth.

26 How is it then,
brethren? when ye
come together, every
one of you hath a
psalm, hath a doc-
trine, hath a tongue,
hath a revelation,
hath an interpreta-

phet; perhaps the ill designs which had
brought them into the assembly, when
they came only as spies: and this was
well suited to the purpose of producing
strong convictions of the presence of God
with Christians. But I chose to para-
phrase the words in such a manner as to
include any remarkable correspondence
between what was spoken, and the thoughts

and state of the mind which such a stran-
ger might be conscious of. Many me-
morable instances of which still happen,
where ministers preach in an experi-
mental manner; and lasting effects have
often been produced in consequence of
such impressions.

^d Five or six, &c.] Five such cases
are mentioned. It seems probable that

tion. Let all things be done to edifying. be speaking at the same time: in consequence of which no one can be distinctly heard, and the assembly degenerates into a kind of tumultuous riot. I beseech you, my friends, to rectify this, and to proceed upon the general canon, which I would recommend to you upon all such occasions, *Let all things be done*, not for ostentation but *for edification*,^e in such a manner as you do in your consciences believe will be most like to do good to the souls of men, and to build up the church of Christ.

27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.

28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let

And in particular, *if any should speak with an* 27 *[unknown] tongue, [let it be] by two, or at most [by] three in one meeting, and that by course: and let some one present still interpret what is said.*^f *But if there be not an interpreter, let* 28 *him be silent in the church,*^g where he can do no

SECT. XXVII.
1 Cor. xiv. 26.

some of these Christians were so full of themselves, and so desirous of exercising their respective gifts, that without waiting for the permission and direction of him who presided in the assembly, (which in the synagogues the apostles themselves seem to have done; compare Acts xiii. 15,) several began speaking or singing in the same minute, and some began while others were speaking. The manner in which discourses were carried on in the schools of the philosophers, where several knots of disputants seem so to have been engaged at the same time, and what happened in Jewish synagogues after worship was concluded, might possibly have given some occasion to an irregularity which to us seems so shocking.

^e *Done for edification.*] I must presume to say, that it appears probable to me that had one officer been appointed as a representative of the apostle, to whose direction the society would in conscience have been obliged in all indifferent matters to submit, some hint would have been given of it, amidst the many opportunities which the state of this Corinthian church especially gave both to St. Paul, and afterwards to Clemens Romanus.

^f *Let one interpret.*] In this method it is evident that any discourse thus delivered would take up more than twice the time in which it might have been delivered, had it first been spoken in a known tongue.

^g *If there be no interpreter, let him be silent.*] Dr. Whitby thinks this was only enjoined to avoid the ostentation of a

man's speaking first in an unknown tongue, and then acting as his own interpreter; but I think it evident from this text, compared with verse 13, that a man might have the gift of speaking with tongues, *who could not interpret*: and the great difficulty is to say, how this could happen, and yet the thing wanting *not be another tongue*; which the distinction between *the gift of tongues* and *the interpretation of tongues* seems to demonstrate that it was not. I can only offer a conjecture here, which it becomes me to do with the greater modesty, as I think it is a pretty singular one: (as indeed the difficulty itself, great as it is, has seldom been stated by commentators.) The miracle which conferred the gift of tongues seems to have been the instantaneous impressing on the mind the familiar and perfect knowledge of a language with which the person was before unacquainted; yet so, that from that time the person receiving it should be able, without any new miracle, to use it as he thought fit; and this, as Dr. Leland well observes, is the only hypothesis on which the abuse of this gift can be accounted for. (See Leland against Morgan, Vol. I. chap. xiii. p. 375.) But I apprehend that though every man using this gift, and understanding what he said, must have been able to have rendered his discourse, sentence by sentence, into his native language, he might be unable to render it into a third, which might be that of many present. Now in such a circumstance the gift of interpretation

SECT. manner of service by uttering what none but him speak to him-
 XXVII. himself can understand: *and let him speak to him- self, and to God.*

1 Cor. *—* *self and to God; let him make use of this lan- guage in his own private devotions, if he has a*
 xiv. 28. *mind by exercise to keep up his readiness in it: but let him not produce it so unreasonably as*

29 *in the present case. And as for those pro- phesyings which we chiefly speak of when*
scriptures are explained; let only two or three of the prophets speak in one assembly; and let the
rest judge and compare one doctrine with ano-

29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

30 *ther, for the farther improvement of all. But if, while the discourse continues, [any thing] be revealed to another that sitteth by, let him not immediately arise and interrupt the first, but let him sit still till he have done speaking.^h*

30 If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

31 *For by this means ye may all, who are thus furnished for it, prophesy one by one, that your instruction and consolation may not be thrown away, which would be the case if many were speaking at once; but all may learn, and all may*

31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

32 *be comforted. And there is no impossibility of doing this; for the Spirit of God that inspires you is not a wild irresistible impulse, like that by which the Pythian priestess, and others, who profess inspiration and prophecy among the Gentiles, pretend to be agitated; but the spirits or inspirations of the Christian prophets produce those calm emotions which are subject to the prophets: they leave a man master of himself, so that he can moderate his passions, and wait the most convenient time and manner of utter-*

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 *ing his oracles. For God is not [the author] of disorder and confusion, but of peace and regu-*

33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as

might take place, if it consisted, as I conjecture it did, in an instantaneous capacity of understanding a strange language just for that time, and rendering what was spoken in it into the native tongue of the interpreter. (Compare the paraphrase on chap. xii. verse 10.) On this hypothesis, and truly I think on this alone, one who had the gift of interpretation might not be able to speak any foreign language at all; and he who had the gift of a tongue might not in some circumstance be able to interpret to those who were then his hearers. In this case the *gift of interpretation*, enabling a man only to act a

secondary part, would be less splendid; but whenever it was exercised, it would always argue the person under an immediate agency of the Spirit, and conduce to his usefulness.

^h *Let the first have done speaking.*] So I think *οὐτως* must here be rendered; for if the direction had been, "Let him that was speaking immediately hold his peace, as soon as another intimates that he has a revelation;" it would introduce a confusion which this advice was intended to prevent; and I think such an interpretation equally inconsistent with reason and the connexion of the place. Compare ver. 32, 33.

in all churches, of the saints.

larity; and this orderly method of proceeding I the rather urge upon you, as it is practised in all the other churches of the saints; and I should be sorry that you, my Corinthian friends, should be remarkable for the irregularity of your proceedings, when God hath been pleased so graciously to distinguish you by such a variety of gifts, and the flourishing state of your society.

SECT.
XXVII.
1 Cor.
xiv. 33.

34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

Let your women be silent in your religious assemblies, if they have not some extraordinary revelation; for it is not commonly permitted to them to speak on such public occasions, but it is their duty to be in subjection to the superior authority of the man: as the law also says, in recording that early sentence on Eve and her daughters for the first transgression, (Gen. iii. 16.) To him shall be thy desire subjected, and he shall rule over thee. And if they have a mind to learn the meaning of any thing which they cannot well understand, let them ask their own husbands at home, as they may more conveniently and freely talk with them without any appearance of ostentation, or suspicion of any other ill principles: but let them not break in upon the assembly with questions; for it is evidently an indecent thing for a woman to speak in the church,ⁱ and suits very ill with that modesty and reserve which is so universally esteemed an ornament to the sex.

36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

I know the present custom among you is 36 contrary to some of these regulations, and perhaps some opposition may be made to them: but permit me to ask, *Did the word of God indeed come out from you?^k* Are you the first church in the world, by whose example all others should be modelled? *Or did it reach to you alone?*

ⁱ *A woman to speak, &c.]* There is an apparent difficulty in reconciling this with chap. xi. 5—13, in which the apostle seems to grant a liberty which he here denies. Besides the solution suggested in the paraphrase on verse 34, some have thought he intended in the former passage only to say how women should speak, if they spoke at all; but here, absolutely to prohibit their doing it: but I cannot think he would debate

and adjust the circumstances of doing an unlawful action. Taking this prohibition to be universal, I should suppose with Dr. Whitby, that *prophesying*, in the foregoing place, signified *singing psalms* and *praying*, not leading the devotions, but *joining with others in prayer*.

^k *Did the word, &c.]* That scepticism, *Whether did the word of God come forth from you alone?* would be the exactest version of *ἡ ἀπ' ὑμῶν, &c.*

SECT. Are you the last and the only Christian society, that you should take upon you to act in so singular a manner? The gospel came from Jerusalem, it is going all over the world, and therefore I must admonish you to behave with such a modest respect to others as becomes those who know yourself to be but a very small part of that noble and extensive body.

1st Cor.
xiv. 36.

37 And if any of you appear to be a prophet, or spiritual [person] endowed with extraordinary gifts above his brethren, let him prove that he is indeed under the influence of the Divine Spirit, by his submission and obedience to these determinations: for he must necessarily acknowledge, that the things which I now write unto you are the commandments of the Lord, dictated by inspiration from him, and not the private conception of my own mind. But if any

38 one is, or affects to appear, ignorant or uncertain about it, let him be ignorant:¹ if he pretend not to own these decisions, I shall not enter into any debate with him; let him stand by the consequence of his ignorance, whether real or affected. But I am confident that most of you have received proofs of my mission too convincing to be shaken by any petulant opposition which may arise against it.

39 Therefore, my brethren, to conclude this long discourse, and to sum up the point in a few words, desire chiefly to prophesy, and yet forbid not those who are willing to do it under such regulations as I have advanced, to speak with tongues; for it is a noble endowment, which I

40 would encourage none to slight or neglect. But especially remember this great comprehensive rule, to be applied to a thousand varieties which may arise, *Let all things be done decently,^m and according to order*: let all be conducted in a

37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

40 Let all things be done decently, and in order.

¹ Let him be ignorant.] Dr. Whitby would render *αγνοῖτω*, let him not be acknowledged to be a true prophet; but that is changing the interpretation of the word in a manner one would not choose to admit without greater necessity.

^m Decently, &c.] It must be by a mere accommodation that this expression can be applied to ceremonies, which may be decent or indecent, ac-

cording to different circumstances attending them. In the sense given in the paraphrase, the words are used by the philosopher when he exhorts men to consider the exact order and regular motions of the heavenly bodies, that they may thereby learn, *το εὐσχημον καὶ το τεταγμένον*, what is decent and orderly. Whichcot's Sel. Sermon. p. 177, Edin. Edit.

regular manner, to prevent such disturbances, disputes and scandals for the future, as have already risen in your society, and will proceed to greater evils, if you do not immediately set upon reforming them.

SECT.
XXVII.
1 Cor.
xiv. 40.

IMPROVEMENT.

How fondly do men flatter themselves with empty appearances! And often how justly do those deserve the imputation of childish folly, the height of whose temper will least allow them to bear it! Let us dare to examine ourselves impartially, and be concerned that we may not be children in understanding: but forming our minds on the maxims of scripture, and our lives on the example of Christ, may we grow up in him to the measure of the stature of a perfect man. But let us be children in malice: let us endeavour to be as free from every gloomy, malignant, selfish passion, as new-born infants are. Who can say he has fully attained this happy and amiable character? Yet let us follow after it, remembering that there is a sense in which (proud and interested, envious and malignant, as, alas! we too much are,) we must become as little children, or we cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Those extraordinary gifts which suited the first planting of Christianity in the world are now ceased; but let us bless God they were ever given, and that we have such an incontestible evidence of the truth of the gospel as this chapter affords. Such endowments must certainly argue a Divine power setting its seal to the gospel; and the reality of such endowments can never be questioned, when we reflect on the manner in which the apostle here reproves the abuse of them: and that in a society where so many were alienated from him and his ministry; and consequently, where such appeals, if not founded on the strictest and most apparent truth, must have exposed him to a contempt never to have been removed.

These miraculous gifts, having abundantly answered their end, are wisely withdrawn; yet still the Divine presence is with the church; of which we have this happy proof, that there are those who find the secrets of their hearts made manifest by the faithful and skilful administration of Christian ordinances: so that if they do not publicly fall down upon their faces in such extraordinary transports, they inwardly adore the Lord God in their hearts, and acknowledge that he is with his church of a truth. May instances of this kind be more frequent, and may the spirituality and fervour with which Divine ordinances shall be administered, be such as may afford more reason to expect them!

Let us regard God as the author, not of confusion, but of

SECT. peace; making it our concern to behave in his sanctuary in a
 XXVII. manner agreeable to this view; with such solemn decorum, and
 with such a tender regard to the edification and comfort of each
 other, as he may approve. May the God of peace deliver Chris-
 tians of every sect and rank from that spiritual pride which
 has thrown many religious societies into great disorder. And
 to advance a state so happy as that of humility and love must
 necessarily be, may what the apostles have written be acknow-
 Ver. 37. ledged as the commandments of the Lord, and Christian wor-
 ship and practice be more regulated by their truly authentic
 canons; which would render many that have been since devised,
 relating to indifferent matters, as unnecessary as some others
 are burdensome, superstitious, and absurd.

SECT. XXVIII.

The apostle enters on his discourse concerning the resurrection of the dead; which he introduces with some remarks on the certainty and importance of Christ's resurrection. 1 Cor. xv. 1—11.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 1.

SECT.
XXVIII.

1 Cor.
xv. 1.

THERE is one topic more that remains to be handled, of those concerning which you write to me; I mean, the great doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; which I perceive some among you begin to doubt; whether seduced by any Jewish teachers of Sadducean principles, or biased by the vain pretences of heathen philosophers, who would despise it as a mean and unworthy hope.^a *But I make known unto you, brethren, and remind you of the gospel which I have preached to you at the very beginning of my ministry among you; which ye have also received with readiness and delight, and in which ye may be said to stand, as much of your establishment in Christianity will depend on your*

1 Cor. xv. 1.

MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein ye stand:

^a Unworthy hope.] It is well known that the primitive Christians were often insulted by the heathen philosophers for their hope of a resurrection; which one of them, ridiculously enough, calls the hope of worms. Compare 2 Tim xi. 18, and the note there. Others taught virtue to be its own necessary reward, in such a manner as tended to overthrow the strongest of all natural arguments for a future state; I mean, that taken

from such an unequal distribution of rewards and punishments, as could not otherwise take place under the government of a righteous God. If Christians were by this tempted so to refine on the doctrine of the resurrection, as in effect to explain it away, it shows the propriety of the apostle's setting himself to prove the resurrection of Christians, rather than a resurrection in general.

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

3 For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures:

4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures:

5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve.

retaining it in its genuine simplicity and purity: **SECT. XXVIII.**
By which gospel also, whereof the doctrine of the resurrection makes so considerable a part, ye are happily brought into the way of being completely and eternally saved, if ye faithfully retain^b those joyful tidings which I delivered unto you; unless indeed^c ye have believed in vain: which will certainly be the case, if ye let go that great anchor of your soul which must support it in the fierce storms and tempests to which you will here be exposed. For I delivered to you among the first [principles] which I inculcated when I came to preach the gospel among you, what I have also received,^d and been taught by Divine inspiration, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures of the Old Testament, in which he was foretold and represented as the great sin-offering: (Isa. liii. 6, 12; Dan. ix. 26.) And I also instructed you, that he was buried in a new tomb, and that his dead body was kept by a guard of his enemies: but kept in vain; for to their confusion, and the perpetual establishment of the faith and hope of his humble followers, he was raised the third day, according to the scriptures,^e which intimate that he should not see corruption in the grave. (Psal. xvi. 10.) And in confirmation of this great truth, I told you, that the same day that he rose, he was seen first of Cephas, or Peter, to whom, that he might comfort his wounded heart under its sorrows for his late fall, he condescended to make his first appearance, excepting that to the women at the sepulchre; and

1 Cor. xv. 2.

^b *Retain.*] So *κατέχευε* evidently signifies. To keep in memory suggests a very inadequate sense.

^c *Unless indeed.*] *Εκτός τε μὴ* is a very remarkable form of expression. Perhaps there may be more in it than most readers are aware. If I mistake not, it suggests the thought expressed, ver. 17. So the two first verses may be a transition; as if he had said, I preach the same gospel still, and I hope you will retain it; yet I have reason to fear some of you entertain notions which tend quite to enervate it.

^d *Received.*] For the import of this phrase, see Gal. i. 12; 1 Cor. xi. 23.

^e *Raised the third day, according to the*

scriptures.] It has been queried, where the scriptures foretel that Christ should rise from the dead on the third day? Some think there is a transposition or parenthesis; so that the meaning will be, he rose again, according to the scriptures; and this on the third day. Chand. of Christianity, p. 370; and so Dr. Bullock replies, that he would have risen according to the scriptures, had it been on the fifth or tenth day. (Bull. Vind. p. 48.) But Mr. Jefferies, whom I follow in the paraphrase, gives what appeared to me the best solution, as it is intimated, John xi. 39, that bodies began to corrupt on the fourth day. See Jeff. Review, p. 127.

SECT. afterwards he was seen by that company who
XXVIII. were called the twelve^f apostles, though several
of the number were then absent. Afterwards

1 Cor.
xv. 6.

he appeared, according to his repeated appointments, to above five hundred brethren at once^g in Galilee, where he gave the most glorious and incontestible proof of the reality of his resurrection in the presence of this great concourse, of whom the greater part continue [alive] until now, and constitute a cloud of witnesses to this important truth; but some are fallen asleep in Jesus, and gone to dwell with him as the great Lord of life.

6 After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once: of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

7 And you may remember I told you also, that after this he was seen of James, and afterwards, just before his ascension, by all the apostles.^h

7 After that, he was seen of James: then of all the apostles.

8 But last of all he also appeared to me, as to an embryo, or one born out of due time, a poor, weak, contemptible creature, from whom nothing good was to be expected, not worthy of the least patience; how much less worthy of being marked out with such distinguishing favours!

8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

9 For I must humbly acknowledge, and I would

9 For I am the

^f Of the twelve.] It is certain neither Judas nor Thomas were there; and as it is observed below, James might probably be absent; but as the council of twenty-three among the Jews might be said to be assembled if the greater part were present, though the number might not be complete; so the company might be called the twelve, though we should suppose the fourth part to have been absent. Compare Mark xvi. 14; Luke xxiv. 36; John xx. 26.

^g Above five hundred.] Probably it was in Galilee, where there was such a number of disciples; though there were no more than an hundred and twenty at Jerusalem, when Matthias was chosen. Dr. Prideaux, Mr. Ditton, and many others, urge this as a glorious proof of the resurrection of Christ. Had it been an imposture, so many false hearts and tongues could never have acted in concert; nor would they all have kept a secret, which remorse, interest, and perhaps often torture, might urge them to divulge; especially as there had been one traitor among the twelve, on account of which, had they been conscious of fraud, a general suspicion of each other's secrecy must have arisen. See Prid. Lett. to a Deist, p. 241.

^h By all the apostles.] The change of phrase, from that in the conclusion of the 5th verse, is very remarkable; and as a very learned, candid, and sagacious person has suggested to me, it very probably intimates, that they who were there called the twelve, that is, the greater part of the company who used to be so denominated, were not all the apostles. On which circumstance this gentleman grounds a very probable conjecture, that James might by some accident, perhaps illness, or affairs indispensably necessary, be detained from meeting his brethren, both on the day of the resurrection, and that day seventh-night, and likewise at the time when Christ appeared to the five hundred; and that he might, in this respect, be upon a level with them, our Lord appeared to him alone, after all the appearances mentioned before. And this account of the matter appears vastly more credible than that which St. Jerome quotes from the gospel of the Nazarenes, that on the death of Christ, James made a vow, that he would neither eat nor drink till he saw Christ risen from the dead: an event of which the apostles had certainly no expectation.

least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

continually bear it in my mind, that *I am the least of all the apostles, who am not indeed worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God*; on which account, considering the transports of my savage zeal, I think myself hardly deserving to be numbered amongst the meanest followers of my Divine Master, and less than the least of all saints. (Eph. iii. 8.)

SECT.
XXVIII.
1 Cor.
xv. 9.

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

But by the grace of God I am what I am, a 10 Christian, an apostle, and not inferior to any of my honoured brethren in that office; and his grace [manifested] towards me, in raising me to so high a dignity and so happy a state, was not displayed in vain: but I laboured more abundantly than they all, conscious that I could never do enough to balance the mischief I had formerly committed, or answer the obligations under which such rich and distinguishing mercy laid me. I exerted myself therefore to the utmost in my apostolical work; which should, by the way, shelter me from the contempt which some are ready to throw upon me: yet, to speak more properly, it was not I, but the grace of God that was with me: God furnished me for the work, he excited me to diligence and zeal in it; to him be the glory of all! His grace 11

11 Therefore, whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

was the cause of all; and whether therefore I, or they, laboured most, and to whomsoever we delivered our message, whether among you or elsewhere, so we preach, and so ye believed. All agree in bearing our testimony to the death and resurrection of Christ, and ye, with all other Christians, have agreed to receive it as the great foundation of our holy religion.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET it be the daily joy of our hearts to think how firm that foundation stands, and what various and convincing evidence we have, that as Christ became incarnate, visited this wretched world, and died for our sins, according to the scriptures; that as Ver. 3. he condescended to go down into the caverns of the grave, and lie there in the cold and silent tomb, humbled in the dust of death; so also, according to the same scriptures, he was raised 4 again on the third day. Let us be very thankful that such convincing proof was given of his resurrection, demonstrated by such infallible tokens, and repeated appearances to all the apos-

SECT. tles; who had every opportunity the most scrupulous doubt
 XXVIII. could demand, of examining at leisure into its certainty. More
 Ver. 5. than five hundred persons were witnesses to it at one time; and
 witnesses who survived to many future years to attest this im-
 portant fact, that our faith and hope might be in God: in God,
 who quickeneth the dead, and who by this resurrection of Jesus
 his Son, hath begotten us again to a lively hope of an inheri-
 tance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. As
 1 we have received, so let us stand fast in this doctrine; and re-
 2 member that our salvation depends on our stedfastly retaining
 it, and that we believe in vain, and worse than in vain, if we
 ever, on any considerations, make shipwreck of faith and of a
 good conscience.

It is a matter of joy and thankfulness, that St. Paul was added
 to this cloud of witnesses who attested the resurrection of Je-
 sus; that great apostle in whom the grace of God was so richly
 magnified; magnified particularly in that humility which he
 9 here expresses in so amiable a manner; calling himself the least
 of the apostles, and declaring that he was unworthy of the name
 of an apostle; and amidst all the labours and glories of this emi-
 nent station in the church, still keeping in his eyes that madness
 with which, in the days of his infidelity, he had wasted it. Shall
 10 we not all learn of him to say, *By the grace of God I am what I*
am? Let us be solicitous that his grace bestowed upon us be
 not in vain; and ever bearing in mind the many sins of our un-
 converted state, and our great unprofitableness since we have
 known God, or rather been known of him, let us labour in our
 Lord's service with proportionable zeal; and when we have la-
 boured to the utmost, and exerted ourselves with the greatest
 fidelity and resolution, let us ascribe it to that Divine agency
 which strengthened us for all, and say again, though some
 should esteem it a disagreeable tautology, *Not I, but the grace*
of God that was with me.

SECT. XXIX.

The Apostle shows the necessary connexion between the resurrection of Christ, which he had established above, and the resurrection of the dead; and urges the importance of retaining that great fundamental of Christianity; in the series of his argument mentioning the surrender of the mediatorial kingdom which Christ shall make at the consummation of all things. 1 Cor. xv. 12—34.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 12.

1 COR. xv. 12.

YOU have heard, my brethren, something NOW if Christ be
 of the convincing evidence which attended
 this great and important doctrine of Christ's

preached that he resurrection; but if Christ is thus preached, that SECT.
rose from the dead, he was assuredly raised from the dead, how do XXIX.
how say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead? With what face can
dead? any who allow of Christ's resurrection pretend
to deny the other, whether out of an attachment

13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.

14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God, that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

^a Neither is Christ raised.] This argument, on which the apostle dwells in so copious a manner, would appear to be of great moment, whatever the principles were by which the doctrine of the resurrection was assaulted. It could not be said that it was in its own nature impossible which was accomplished in Christ; and it would prove that the hope of a resurrection was not, as the Gentiles represented it, a mean and

sordid hope, since it was accomplished in the Son of God. Compare verse 1, note ^a.

^b Still in your sins.] This plainly shows how necessary it was that there should be something more than reformation, which was plainly, in fact, wrought in order to their being delivered from their sins; even that atonement, the sufficiency of which God attested by raising our great Surety from the grave.

1 Cor.
xv. 12.

SECT. piated guilt; for with the doctrine of the re-
XXIX. surrection of Christ, that of the efficacy of his

1 Cor.
xv. 18.

atonement is inseparably connected. And then also there would be this deplorable consequence farther attending, that *they who sleep in Christ are perished*; even all deceased Christians, not excepting the most excellent of them, who have died for their religion. They have lost their life and being together on this supposition, in the cause of one who, if still among the dead, must have been an impostor and false prophet.

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished.

19 And this scheme, which would represent those that sleep in Christ as perished, would, I am sure, be a very terrible doctrine to us the apostles of Jesus, in such a circumstance as this: for *if it were in this life only that we have hope in Christ, we, who are exposed to such a variety of calamities and dangers for his sake, were of all men in the world the most pitiable*:^c since it is evident that amidst such evils as these, nothing could comfort and support us but the hopes of immortality; and we must be at once the vilest and the most wretched of mankind, if, while we make such pretences to them, we were indeed governed by any lower views.

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

20 But we will now dwell no longer on these melancholy suppositions; for we assuredly know that *Christ is indeed risen from the dead*,^d and

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the

^c *Of all men the most pitiable*: ελεεινόςτατος.]

It is quite foreign to the purpose to argue from this text, as some have done, that "if there were no future state, virtue would make men more miserable than they would otherwise be." It is evident St. Paul here speaks, not of the case of good men in general, if their hopes of future happiness should after all be disappointed, but of the case of the apostles and other preachers of Christianity, if amidst all their hardships and persecutions they were not supported by this hope. Destitute of this amidst the extremest sufferings, they must have been perpetually subjected to the upbraidings of their own minds for sacrificing every view of happiness in this world or another, to advance what they knew to be a pernicious falsehood. Perhaps there never were men on earth so criminal and so wretched as they must, on this supposition, have been. See the thought

illustrated at large in my Sermons on the Power and Grace of Christ, &c. Sermon ix. p. 259—262.

^d *Christ is indeed risen, &c.*] It is a great mistake to imagine that the apostle is employed throughout this chapter in proving the resurrection. The proof lies in a very little room, chiefly verses 12—19, and almost all the rest of the chapter is taken up in illustrating, vindicating, or applying it. The proof is indeed very short, but most solid and convincing—that which arose from Christ's resurrection. Now that only proved a resurrection to be in fact not impossible, but, which was much more, as it proved him to be a Divine Teacher, it proved the doctrine of a general resurrection, which he so expressly taught. It was natural for so good a man also to insist on the sad consequences which would follow with respect to himself and his brethren from giving up so glorious a hope; and the cordial

first-fruits of them that slept.

21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all

we are sure that in this his resurrection he is become the first-fruits of them that slept;^e so that it is the security of ours. For as death [came] on the whole human race by means of one man, who brought mortality on all his posterity as the consequence of that one great offence, so likewise by means of another man [cometh] the resurrection of the dead; and our happy relation to him abundantly repairs the damage we sustained by our fatal relation to the former. For as in Adam all are dead, and a sentence of inevitable death is come upon us all, as descended from him; so we Christians have a joyful persuasion for ourselves and for our brethren, that (though we are neither capable of effecting or meriting such a change,) in Christ we all shall also be made alive. But it was fit that every one should be re-animated, raised, and glorified in his own order: it was fit that Christ, after a very short abode in the grave, should rise as the first-fruits, and as such should present himself to God, and use his recovered life in his service; and they who are Christ's property, the whole body of those that belong to him, should be raised up a considerable time afterwards, and appear as a glorious harvest in full maturity, at the important hour of his coming, when his voice shall awaken and his almighty hand restore them.

And then [shall] the end of the world [be,] the grand catastrophe of all those wonderful scenes that have held in suspense so many succeeding generations; when he shall publicly and solemnly deliver up the mediatorial kingdom to God, even the Father, by whose commission he has held it, and to whose glory he has always administered it: when he shall have abolished^f

manner in which he speaks of this is a noble internal argument, which I hope many of my readers will feel, though I have been obliged to be less copious in the paraphrase than I could have wished.

^e First-fruits of them that slept.] It is without sufficient reason that Mr. Fleming (Christ. Vol. i. p. 218,) would render ἀπαρχὴ ruler, governor, or commander.—Κεκοιμημένων here is explained by κοιμηθέντες, verse 18, and both must refer

to Christians, of whose resurrection alone, and not that of the wicked, he evidently speaks in this whole chapter.

^f Abolished and deposed.] The word ἀναιργεῖσθαι generally signifies, “divesting a thing of some power, whether lawful or usurped, which it formerly had, and reducing it to an incapacity of exerting that energy any more.” Thus it is used of Satan, Heb. ii. 14; of death here and verse 26, and 2 Tim. i.

SECT.

XXIX.

1 Cor.
xv. 21.

SECT. and deposed *all principality, and all authority* rule, and all au-
 XXIX. *and power, that has opposed itself to his govern-* thority and power.

1 Cor.
 xv. 24.

ment, and shall have triumphed over all the efforts which either men or devils could ever make against his ever-growing empire and do-

25 *minion. For we know, that according to the tenor of that ancient prophecy, (Psal. cx. 1,) which carries with it so illustrious a reference to the Messiah and his kingdom, he must reign till he have put [all] his enemies under his feet; so as that they should become his footstool, and subserve that exaltation which they have endea-*

26 *voured to prevent. And so universal shall the triumph be, that the very last enemy, [even] death, shall be deposed and destroyed: that enemy which continues in some measure to hold the subjects of Christ under its dominion, even when the temptations of the world, and the malice of Satan, can hold them no longer, and when every remainder of corrupt nature and human infirmity has long since ceased in the perfect holiness of the intermediate state, and its unmingled serenity and joy.*

27 *This, I say, must necessarily be implied: for it is elsewhere said, he hath put all things under his feet, (Psal. viii. 6,) and it must accordingly be accomplished; but [it is] evident enough, that when he saith that all things were subjected to him, it is with the exception of him by whom all things were thus subjected to him. None can surely imagine that the Son was ever to reign over the great and glorious Father of all; but on the contrary it may naturally be concluded, that he would still direct his administration to the glory of him from whom he received his king-*

28 *dom. But when the Father shall have fulfilled this promise in its utmost extent, and all things shall be subjected to him, so that it shall appear to every eye that he is indeed Lord of all; then shall the Son also himself, amidst all the glories of that triumph, be, and declare himself to be, subject to him that subjected all things to him,^g by public act, in the midst of this most*

25 For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him.

28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him;

10; of temporal princes, 1 Cor. i. 28. chap. ii. 6; and of the ceremonial law, Eph. ii. 15. ^g Then shall the Son also himself be subject, &c.] I hope I shall be forgiven, if

that God may be all in all.

august assembly, giving up, as it were, his commission to preside as universal Lord in the mediatorial kingdom to him; as having answered the end for which it was given him, in the complete salvation of all his people, whom he shall then introduce into a state of the greatest nearness to God, and most intimate converse with him; *that God may be*, and that he may appear to be, *all in all*; that they all may enjoy complete and everlasting happiness, in the full communication of the Divine favour to them for ever, in a world where they shall no longer need a Mediator to introduce them to him.

SECT. XXIX.

1 Cor. xv. 28.

29 Else what shall they do, which are baptized for the dead,

Such are our views and hopes as Christians; 29 *else if it were not so, what should they do who are baptized in token of their embracing the Christian faith in the room of the dead,*^h who are just fallen in the cause of Christ; but are yet supported by a succession of new converts, who immediately offer themselves to fill up their places, as ranks of soldiers that advance to the

after the best attention I could use, I have missed the true and exact sense of this most difficult text. It is surprising to find authors of such different sentiments as Witsius and Crellius, agreeing to speak of Christ as returning, as it were, to a private station, and being "as one of his brethren," when he has thus given up the kingdom. The union of the Divine and human natures in the person of the great Emanuel, the incomparable virtues of his character, the glory of his actions, and the relation he bears to his people, with all the texts which assert the perpetuity of his government, prohibit our imagining that he shall ever cease to be illustriously distinguished from all others, whether men or angels, in the heavenly world, through eternal ages. To me it appears that the kingdom to be given up is the rule of this lower world, which is then to be consumed; and that it may seem as if a province of his empire were destroyed, his administration, undertaken in avowed subservience to the scheme of redemption, (Eph. i. 10.) and completed in the resurrection of all his people, shall close in a *descent and honourable manner*; God will declare the ends of it fully answered, and the whole body of his people shall be introduced by him into a state of more intimate approach to and communion with God,

than had been known by the spirits of the blessed in their separate state.

^h *Who are baptized in the room of the dead.*] It would be almost endless to enumerate, and much more to canvass, all the interpretations which have been given of this obscure and ambiguous phrase, *ἐπεὶ πῶς νεκρῶν*. I think that of Sir Richard Ellys, which I have given in the paraphrase, much preferable to any other. See Fortuita Sacra, p. 137, &c. As for other interpretations, there is no reason to believe that the superstitious custom mentioned by Epiphanius, of baptizing a living person, as representing one who had died unbaptized, is here referred to; it is more likely to have risen from a mistake of this passage, than to have been so early prevalent. Mr. Cradock's supposing it to allude to washing dead bodies, neither suits the grammar, nor really makes any significant sense. Nor is there any need of supposing that *νεκρῶν* is put for *νεκρῶν*, and refers to their being baptized into the religion of Jesus, who, on the adversary's hypothesis, is still dead. The senses which Crellius and Bishop Atterbury maintain, differ so little from each other and that we have given, that it may suffice to say, that each expresses but a part of the sense, and loses something of the spirit which we apprehend in these words.

SECT. combat in the room of their companions, who if the dead rise not
XXIX. have just been slain in their sight? *If the doctrine I oppose be true, and the dead are not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?*

1 Cor.
xv. 29.

raised at all, why are they nevertheless thus baptized in the room of the dead, as cheerfully ready, at the peril of their lives, to keep up the
30 *cause of Jesus in the world? And indeed, how could my conduct be accounted for in any other light, but by supposing that we act with a steady and governing view to this great principle and this glorious hope? Why otherwise are we every hour exposed to so much danger in the service of a Master from whom it is evident we have no secular rewards to expect?*

30 And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?

31 Yet, my brethren, *I do upon this solemn occasion protest and even swear to you, by the greatest of all asseverations, by our hopes and our joys as Christians, by our rejoicingⁱ and confidence common to us all, and which I with you have in Christ Jesus our Lord; I protest, I say, by this, that I daily die; that is, that I am every day surrounded, as it were, with death in its most terrible forms, and bear so many evils, that every hour of my life seems a new martyrdom. One great instance of this has so lately happened, that I cannot forbear mentioning it. If, to speak after the manner of men, or to use a common proverbial phrase, I have, like a slave exposed upon a public theatre, fought with wild beasts at Ephesus,^k having been*

31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus,

ⁱ *Our rejoicing.*] Our received copies read it, *ἐκείνων*, *your rejoicing*; but the reading which I follow seems so much more natural and easy, that one can scarce forbear believing it authentic. Yet it may be interpreted into a very pertinent sense: "I protest by *your* joys, " which I do so cordially take part in, " that I may call them my own."

^k *Fought with wild beasts at Ephesus.*] The stories which Nicephorus (lib. ii. cap. 25.) and Theodoret give us, of an encounter which St. Paul had with *wild beasts* on the theatre at Ephesus, (see Witsii Mel. Vit. Paul. cap. viii. sect. 23, &c.) have been so far regarded by Dr. Whitby, that he contends for the literal interpretation of this passage; in favour of which it is also urged, that had he spoken of *brutal men*, he would rather have mentioned the assaults that were made upon him at Lystra, where he was

stoned, and supposed to be dead. But the danger of being pulled to pieces might be greater at Ephesus; it had happened very lately, and as the scene was much nearer Corinth, it might be more natural for him to mention it here. The silence of St. Luke in his history, as to so memorable an event as a combat with *beasts* would have been, and St. Paul's omitting it in the large catalogue of his sufferings, (2 Cor. xi. 23.) together with his known privilege as a Roman citizen, which would probably, as to be sure it should legally, have protected him from such an insult, do all (as Mr. Cradock and others have observed,) favour the figurative interpretation. And the expression, *κατὰ ἀνθρώπων*, *after the manner of men*, or *humanly speaking*, has a propriety on this hypothesis which it cannot have on the other, and seems to be quite decisive.

what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.

assaulted with the most savage fury by a tumultuous multitude there, *what advantage have I gained by such a combat, if my hopes may not be allowed to open into immortality?* On the contrary, *if the dead rise not at all*, the Epicurean maxim might seem to be justified, “Let us “make the best of this short life, which is the “whole period of our being; and giving up “those sublime sentiments and pursuits which “belong not to creatures of so short and low an “existence, *let us eat and drink, since we are to “die, as it were, to-morrow*¹ or the next day: “for so little is the difference between one “period of such a life and another, that it is “scarce worth while to make the distinction.”

SECT.

XXIX.

1 Cor.
xv. 32.

33 Be not deceived: Evil communications corrupt good manners.

Be not deceived, brethren, but be upon your 33 *guard against such pernicious maxims and reasonings as these; and if you value either faith or a good conscience, do not converse familiarly with those that teach them; for, as the poet Menander well expresses it, Good manners are debauched by talk profane.*^m *Awake, therefore,* 34 *as becomes righteous and good men,*ⁿ *from the intoxications of such wild and delusive dreams as these; and sin not in supporting or countenancing doctrines so subversive of the Christian faith and hope; for some are still ignorant of God, and with the abused light of Christianity know less of him than well-improved reason might teach them. I say this to your shame, considering how much you boast of your knowledge,*

34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

¹ *Let us not, &c.]* This is the great argument urged to prove, that by the resurrection of the dead St. Paul means a *future state*. But the true solution seems to be, that he writes all along upon a supposition, that if such proof as he had produced of Christ's resurrection were not to be depended upon, we could have no certainty at all with respect to *any future existence*. And I must declare that it seems to me, that the natural arguments of the immortality of the soul, and future retributions, do appear to carry with them great probability, notwithstanding all that Mr. Haller has offered to invalidate them. Yet the degree of evidence is by no means comparable to that which, admitting the truths of the facts alleged, the Co-

rinthians must have had of Christ's resurrection, with which ours has so necessary a connexion. And consequently, had these proofs been given up, what might have been pleaded in favour of the other, would probably have made very little impression.

^m *Good manners are debauched.]* The original words of Menander are an iambic verse: I chose therefore to translate them thus, and it is very agreeable to the Greek in this connection, which seems to determine *ἀμίδαι κακὰς* to *profane discourses*.

ⁿ *Awake, as becomes righteous men.]* As some read for *δικαίως, δίκαιοι*, which gives rather a more forcible sense, I chose this rendering, which is a kind of medium between the two readings.

SECT. which, in this plain and important branch of it,
 XXIX. appears so wretchedly deficient; while you cul-
 tivate so many vain subtleties, which tend rather
 1 Cor. to corrupt than to exalt and perfect your minds.
 xv. 34.

IMPROVEMENT.

- Ver. WELL may we rejoice to see the doctrine of our own resur-
 12, 16 rection so closely connected in the sacred writings, and especially
 in this excellent discourse of St. Paul, with that of our blessed
 Redeemer, as that they should be declared to stand or to fall
 20 together. For Christ is assuredly risen from the dead, and
 21, 23 become the first-fruits of them that slept. He hath repaired,
 to all his spiritual seed, the damage that Adam brought upon
 his descendants; yea, he is become to them the author of a far
 nobler life than the posterity of Adam lost by him.
- 24, 26 Let us meditate with unutterable joy on the exaltation of our
 glorified Head, of our gracious Sovereign, who has conquered
 death himself, and will make us partakers of his victory. He
 hath received from his Father glory, honour, and dominion; and
 he shall reign till his conquest be universal and complete, and
 till death be not only stripped of its trophies, but rendered sub-
 servient to his triumphs; shall reign, till all his purposes for his
 Father's glory and his own be finally accomplished.
- 27 But O, who can express the joy and glory of that day when
 Christ shall give up the kingdom to the Father, and present unto
 him all his faithful subjects transformed into his own image! a
 beautiful and splendid church indeed, for ever to be the object of
 the Divine complacence, for ever to dwell in the Divine presence,
 in a state of the greatest nearness to God, who shall then be all
 in all. Well may the expectation of this illustrious period cheer
 the Christian under his greatest extremities, and make him of all
 men the most happy, when otherwise, on account of his suffer-
 ings in the flesh, he might seem of all men the most miserable.
 Well may this his rejoicing in Christ Jesus, that sacred oath
 which this persecuted and distressed apostle, with so sublime a
 31 spirit, here uses, encourage him to go on, though he be daily
 32, 34 dying; though he were daily to encounter the most savage of
 mankind, and death itself in its most dreadful forms. Well may
 this knowledge of God, of his gracious purposes, and of his ex-
 alted Son, awaken us to righteousness; well may it deliver us
 from the bondage of sin.
- 33 Let us retain these noble principles of doctrine and action,
 and guard against those evil communications, those sceptical and
 licentious notions, which would corrupt our spirits, which would
 enervate every generous spark which the gospel kindles up into
 a flame, and by bounding our views within the narrow circle of

mortal life, would degrade us from the anticipations of angelical felicity to the pursuits of brutal gratifications. SECT. XXX.

S E C T. XXX.

The Apostle answers objections against the resurrection, drawn from our not being able to conceive of the particular manner in which it shall be effected; and concludes with urging it as a noble incentive to the greatest steadiness and zeal in religion. 1 Cor. xv. 35, to the end.

1 COR. XV. 35.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 35.

BUT some man will say, *How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?*

I HAVE thus endeavoured to confirm your faith and establish your hope in the great and glorious doctrine of a resurrection; *but some one will perhaps be ready petulantly to object and say, How are the dead raised up, when their bodies are quite dissolved, and the particles of which they consisted scattered abroad, and perhaps become parts of other bodies? and if they are raised, with what [kind of] bodies do they come out of their graves, and what alteration is made in their constitution and organization, to fit them for a future life in so many respects different from this?*

SECT. XXX.

1 Cor. x. 35.

36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.

Thou thoughtless creature, who perhaps pridest thyself in the sagacity of this objection, as if it were some mighty effort of penetration, how easily mightest thou find an answer to it from what passes every day in the works of nature? That seed which thou sowest in thy field is not quickened to new life and verdure, except it appear to die:^a before it springs up to the future vegetable, whatever it be, it is macerated, decayed, and at length consumed in the earth.

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain.

And [as for] that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body which shall be produced from that seed which is committed to the ground, but bare grain, perhaps of wheat, or of any other kind of [grain,] in which there is no appearance of root

^a *Except it die.]* To this it hath been objected, "that if the seed die, it never bears fruit." But it is certain that the seed in general does consume away in the ground, though a little *germen* or bud which makes a part of it springs

up into new life, and is fed by the death and corruption of the rest. So that these wise philosophers of our own talk just as foolishly as the *Corinthian free-thinkers*, whom they vindicate. See John xii. 24.

SECT. or of stalk, of blade or of ear. *But God, in*
 XXX. the course of his natural operations, by certain
 laws of vegetation, with which thou art entirely
 1 Cor. unacquainted, *gives it a body as he pleases,* and
 xv. 38. such a variety of parts as he hath thought fit
 to determine for that particular species, *and to*
each of the seeds its own proper body:^b not only
 a body of the same sort, but that which, by
 virtue of some connexion it had with this or
 that individual grain, may properly be called
 its own, though in its form much different and
 much more beautiful.

38 But God giveth
 it a body as it hath
 pleased him, and to
 every seed his own
 body.

39 There is an immense variety in the works of
 God, even in those which fall under the inspec-
 tion of our senses, feeble and limited as they
 are, while we dwell in flesh and blood. *All*
flesh, you know, is not the same kind of flesh,
but the flesh of men, and of cattle,^c of fishes, and
of fowls, is different each from the other, in its
form, qualities, and manner of being subsisted.

39 All flesh is not
 the same flesh: but
 there is one kind of
 flesh of men, another
 flesh of beasts, ano-
 ther of fishes, and
 another of birds.

40 *[There are] also celestial bodies and terrestrial*
bodies; but the glory of the celestial and the ter-
restrial are apparently different, and the bright-
est lustre the latter can have, is but a faint re-
flexion of what is received from the former.

40 There are also
 celestial bodies, and
 bodies terrestrial:
 but the glory of the
 celestial is one, and
 the glory of the ter-
 restrial is another.

41 And even in the glory of the celestial bodies
 there is also a wonderful variety: *There is one*
superior and incomparable glory of the sun,
which often shines with a lustre scarce to be
endured; and another reflected and milder glory
of the moon; and another glory of the stars,
which, as they appear to us, are far inferior to
either of the two great luminaries. And again,
[one] star differeth from another star in glory,^d

41 There is one
 glory of the sun, and
 another glory of the
 moon, and another
 glory of the stars;
 for one star differeth
 from another star in
 glory.

^b *Its own proper body.*] The apostle
 seems more directly to speak of *that* as
 its proper body, which is peculiar to
 that species of grain; yet undoubtedly
 each ear has a peculiar reference to one
 individual as its proper seed, in such
 a manner as another of the same spe-
 cies has not; and what follows, plainly
 suits such a view.—God is said to *give*
it this body as he pleases, because we know
 not how it is produced; and the apos-
 tle's leading thought is, "That it is ab-
 surd to argue against a resurrection,
 on a principle which is so palpably
 false as that must be, which supposes

"us to understand all the process of
 the Divine works."

^c *Cattle.*] So καὶ ζώων signifies; but it
 seems to be put for *beasts* in general.

^d *And one star differeth, &c.*] It is in
 the original γὰρ, that is, *for*; but I con-
 clude that *particle* is here used only as
 a *copulative*; else we must suppose the
 apostle to argue more philosophically
 than he probably intended, and to assert
 that the sun and moon were *stars*. He
 plainly speaks of the lustre which these
 celestial luminaries exhibit to us, not of
 what they have in themselves, without
 any regard to their aspects on us.

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

according to their respective magnitudes, in reference to which they are ranged by astronomers under different classes.

SECT.
XXX.

1 Cor.
xv. 42.

So [shall be] also the resurrection of the pious dead:^e another kind of glory shall appear than human nature has known in its purest state, in any beauty of form or ornaments of dress. There shall indeed, as I intimated but now, be some difference in the degree of that glory, correspondent to the different excellencies in the characters of good men, on whom it is to pass: but all shall experience a most illustrious and happy change; so that it may be said concerning the body of them all in general, *It is sown or committed, like seed to the ground, in corruption*, just ready to putrify, and through various forms of putrefaction to be reduced to the dust: but *it is raised in incorruption*, so that no accident or disorder whatsoever shall be able to dissolve it again, or to threaten it in the least degree. *It is sown in dishonour*, in a poor contemptible state, and under a kind of infamy put upon it by the execution of God's first sentence against sin: but *it is raised in glory*,^f every part and trace of the curse being abolished, and itself being formed in such a manner as to make it appear that the King of heaven delights to honour the happy spirit on which he bestows such a dress. *It is sown in weakness*, absolutely incapable of any even the lowest degree of action or sensation, and deprived of those limited abilities which it possessed in this its mortal life: but *it is raised in power*, endowed with almost angelic degrees of strength, vigour and activity. *It is sown an animal body*,⁴⁴ formed to the purposes of animal life in this present world; but *it is raised a spiritual body*, formed to a noble superiority to the mean gratifications of this imperfect state, and fitted to be

^e *The resurrection of the pious dead.*] Of them it is evident the apostle here speaks, and not of the *dead* in general. Compare verses 23, 43, 49, and 57, with 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, and verse 54. St. Paul (Phil. iii. 11,) and our Lord (Mat. xxii. 30; Luke xx. 35,) mean the same thing by the resurrection.

^f *It is raised in glory.*] Some think this

refers to the garment of light which the body shall put on at the resurrection; on which Dr. Whitby has a remarkable note here, (compare Mat. xviii. 2; Acts ix. 3; Rev. i. 14, 15; Dan. xii. 3; Wisd. iii. 7; Mat. xiii. 43; and Mark ix. 3.) and which he thinks remarkably to illustrate the matter *ex adverso*.

SECT. the instrument of the soul, in the most exalted services of the spiritual and divine life. For it is certain, that as *there is an animal body*, with

There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

1 Cor.
xv. 44.

which we are now by daily and frequently by unhappy experience acquainted, so *there is also a spiritual body*: God can exalt and refine matter to a degree of purity and excellence to us unknown; and there are many bodies now existing so pure and active, as that in compa-

45 rison they may be called spirits. *And so it is written with respect to the former, (Gen. ii. 7.) that the first man Adam, when God had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, was made a living soul;*^g so that even in the original state of rectitude and felicity in which man was created, he was made capable of, and fitted to, an animal life here upon earth: whereas the Lord Jesus Christ, who by virtue of the influence he has upon all his seed, as their spiritual Head and great federal Representative, may well be called *the second or latter Adam, [is] for an enlivening spirit*^h to those who are united to him, and will not only purify their souls by the operation of his Spirit communicated to them, but at last spiritualize their very bodies.

45 And so it is written. The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46 Nevertheless, the spiritual Adam [was] not first, but the animal, and afterward the spiritual; and as the first Adam existed before Christ was sent to become our Saviour, so must we first wear that animal body which we derive from the one, before we put on that spiritual body which we
47 derive from the other. *The first man [was] from the earth, and so earthy: he was created out of the dust of the earth, and his body was only a mass of animated clay, in reference to*

46 Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural: and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man is of the earth, earthy:

^g *Made a living soul.*] This is a quotation from Moses; and there seems to be a peculiar emphasis in the original, which I know not how to preserve in the translation, in the reference of ψυχή to ψυχικόν, in the former verse, as distinguished from πνευματικόν; and refers to such a difference between ψυχή, the animal soul, and πνεύμα, the rational spirit, as is more clearly expressed, (1 Thess. v. 23.) and is also very agreeable to the import of נפש חיה, the word which Moses uses.

^h *The second—an enlivening spirit.*] This

is not a quotation from scripture, as some have thought, but what the apostle adds on occasion of the quotation brought above; as if he had said, Christ is the last Adam, as an illustrious antitype of the first, (Rom. v. 14.) and he hath in himself a spirit, with which he quickeneth whom he pleases, and in what degree he pleases, John i. 4; and verses 21, 26. The words *living* and *enlivening* have such a correspondence to each other, as ζῶσαν and ζωοποιον. I therefore preferred the latter of them to *quickening*, though the sense be entirely the same.

the second man is the Lord from heaven.

which it was said, Dust thou art, (Gen. iii. 19;) *the second man*, of whom we speak, [*is*] *the Lord from heaven*: he came originally from the heavenly world, to which he is returned; and whatever of earth there was in the composition of the body he condescended to wear, it is now completely purified and refined into the most glorious form. And *such as the earthy* [was, 48 *are*] *they also that are earthy*: they all descended from him, and have no higher original, are mean, mortal, corruptible creatures; and *such as the heavenly* [*is, are*] *they also that are heavenly*: they who are, as it were, born of Christ by the regenerating influences of his Spirit, and therefore are to live with him in heaven, shall at last have such glorious bodies as he hath. And it is delightful beyond all ex-
pression, to think of it with self-application, that *as we* in particular *have borne* and do now bear *the image of the earthy*; as assuredly as we are now sinful, afflicted, and mortal men, like the first Adam; so surely *shall we also bear the image of the heavenly*; so surely shall we be brought to resemble Christ in purity, glory, and immortality.

SECT.

XXX.

1 Cor.
xv. 47.

48 As is the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

But when I spake of bearing the image of 50 the earthy Adam in mortality, I would not be understood as asserting that every one of the descendants of Adam shall, in fact, go through these pangs of death, and that dissolution in the grave, which Adam has experienced. *This I say, brethren*, I affirm it as a constant and important truth, *that flesh and blood*, such weak and crazy systems of it as those in which we now lodge, *cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth* a body impregnated with the seeds of corruption *inherit incorruption*: it is utterly unfit for the pure ethereal regions of the blessed, and indeed incapable of subsisting in them. This is universally true; yet, *behold! I tell you* 51 *a mystery*, that is, a doctrine hitherto unknown, and which you cannot now be able fully to comprehend: for *we* Christians *shall not all sleep*, shall not all submit to the stroke of death, so that our bodies should all lie mouldering in the grave, which is their general doom; *but we shall all*, the living as well as the dead, at the

51 Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

SECT. appearance of Christ to the final judgment, *be*
 XXX. *changed* in a most glorious and happy manner
 into the image of our descending Lord. And

1 Cor.
 xv. 52.

this change, great and illustrious as it is, the
 Divine power shall effect in less time than we
 have been speaking of it: for it shall pass *in a*
moment, in an imperceptible point of time, and
 even *in the twinkling of an eye*, just at the in-
 stant when *the last trumpet* is blown by the Di-
 vine command, to awaken all the millions of
 saints who are sleeping in the dust: *for the*
trumpet shall then sound, the voice of the arch-
 angel, and attending celestial legions, shall fill
 the whole earth and heaven with an astonishing
 noise, *and the dead shall* immediately, as upon
 its summons, *be raised incorruptible*, and we,
 that is, those of us Christians who are living,
*shall be changed*ⁱ as Enoch and Elijah were in
 the day of their translation: that body which
 but a moment before appeared just as ours now
 do, shall, quick as thought, be transformed into
 an image of that worn by our triumphant Lord,
 and fitted for all the most active services, and all
 the purest sensations and delights, of the celestial

53 state. For in order to that, as I have just ob-
 served, *it is necessary that this corruptible put*
on incorruption, and that *this mortal put on im-*
mortality, so as to be no longer subject to dis-

54 eases or death. But when this glorious and long
 expected event shall be accomplished, *when this*
corruptible part of our frame shall have put on
incorruption, and *this mortal shall have put on*
immortality, then shall the saying be brought to
 pass which is written, (Isa. xxv. 8,) *Death is*
swallowed up in victory, and perfectly subdued
 and destroyed, and so happy a state introduced,
 that it would not be known that death had ever
 had any place or power among Christ's subjects

55 at all: And in the assured view of this, may the
 Christian, even now, with the greatest pleasure,

52 In a moment,
 in the twinkling of
 an eye, at the last
 trump. For the trum-
 pet shall sound, and
 the dead shall be
 raised incorruptible,
 and we shall be
 changed.

53 For this cor-
 ruptible must put on
 incorruption, and
 this mortal must put
 on immortality.

54 So when this
 corruptible shall
 have put on incor-
 ruption, and this
 mortal shall have
 put on immortality,
 then shall be brought
 to pass the saying
 that is written,
 Death is swallowed
 up in victory.

55 O death, where

ⁱ We, that is, those of us Christians
 who are living, *shall be changed*.] As the
 phrase will admit of the looser sense the
 paraphrase gives, I cannot allow of the
 argument drawn from hence, to prove
 either that the apostle expected he should
 live till Christ appeared to judgment, or

that he should be raised from the dead,
 and continue upon earth some time before
 that great event happened: Though I con-
 fess the argument which Mr. Fleming
 draws from hence, in favour of the last
 of these opinions, is very plausible.
 Compare 1 Thess. iv. 15.

is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

take up his song of triumph: Where [is] thy pointed and destructive sting, O death? Where [is] thy victory, O grave? How little hurt canst thou do me? For how little a while shalt

SECT. XXX.
1 Cor. xv. 55.

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

thou be able to triumph over me! The very sting and torture of death, that which arms it with its greatest terrors, [is] the consideration of its being the punishment of sin, and consequently its foreboding future misery as the effect of the Divine displeasure: and the power of sin, that which constitutes its malignity, and gives it these killing weapons, [is,] that it is a transgression of the Divine law: But thanks [be] to God, who in his infinite mercy hath taken away the sting and terror of death, and giveth us the prospects and the joys of a complete victory over it, by the displays of his pardoning grace, through our Lord Jesus Christ. May we ever remain under those grateful impressions that suit so important an obligation!

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. May we ever remain under those grateful impressions that suit so important an obligation!

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye fixed on this as the great foundation of your souls, and immoveable in your regards to it, though strongly borne and pressed upon by a variety of temptations and dangers; be abounding always in the work of the Lord, in every service you are capable of performing, which may be acceptable to this your great and compassionate Redeemer; as well knowing that your labour in the service of such a Lord is not, on the whole, in vain, but that whatsoever you may at present suffer for his sake, you shall receive a most glorious reward in that happy day of the resurrection concerning which I have been speaking so largely.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us learn from this incomparable discourse of the apostle, Ver. 35. to curb that vain curiosity which is so ready in matters of di-

* Where is thy sting? &c.] The original has a kind of poetical turn which seems in some measure to suit the sublimity of the sentiment; for the first of the clauses is an ionic, and the second a trochaic verse, Πῃ σὺ, θάνατε, τὸ κενεῖον; πῃ σὺ, ἄδῃ, τὸ νικῶν; and Mr. Pope has only transposed them to make them, as they stand in our version, the conclusion of

one of his stanzas; O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? It is generally thought that these words are borrowed from Hos. xiii. 10, 14, which we render, "O death, I will be thy plague, &c.;" and some urge that ἡνὶκᾶ has been read for ἡνὶκᾶ; but I do not see there is any certain evidence that the apostle intended any quotation at all.

SECT. vine revelation to break out into an unbecoming petulance; and
 XXX. where we are sure that God declares the thing, let us leave it
 ——— to him to overcome every difficulty that may seem to attend the
 manner in which it shall be effected. Nothing may be more
 useful in order to the conquering such a weakness, than to ob-
 serve the operations of God in the works of nature, where he

Ver. 38. gives to every seed, whether animal or vegetable, such a body as
 shall please him. Each is proper for its sphere, and beautiful
 in its connection and order, though the degree of their glory be
 39, 40 different. And thus all the diversity of glory which shall at
 last be apparent among the children of God, even the children
 of the resurrection, shall serve to illustrate the divine wisdom,
 and goodness, and faithfulness.

The alterations made in every instance will indeed be won-
 53 derful, when this mortal puts on immortality, and this corrupti-
 47, &c. ble puts on incorruption. Let us for ever adore the Divine
 goodness, that when, by our relation to the first Adam, we
 were under a sentence of condemnation and death, he was pleas-
 ed in his infinite mercy to appoint that we should stand related
 to Christ, as the second Adam, in so happy a bond, that by him
 we might recover what we had lost in the former; yea, and far
 49 more: so that as we have borne the image of the earthy, we
 might as surely bear the image of the heavenly. O let us ear-
 nestly aspire after this blessedness; and remember that our
 bearing the image of his holiness is inseparably connected with
 the hope of so glorious a privilege!

Let us endeavour, therefore, by cultivating holiness in all its
 branches, to maintain this hope in all its spirit and energy;
 longing for that glorious day when, in the utmost extent of the
 54 prophetic expression, death shall be swallowed up in victory,
 and millions of voices, after the long silence of the grave, shall
 55 burst out at once into that triumphant song, O death, where is
 56 thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? And when we see
 57 death disarmed, and the terrors of the law silenced, let us bless
 God for Jesus Christ, by whom the precepts of the law were
 perfectly fulfilled and its penalty endured; that so we might
 not only be delivered from the curse, but called to inherit the
 18, 19 blessing. Let it be considered as an engagement to universal
 obedience; and in the assurance that whatever other labours
 58 may be frustrated, those in the Lord shall never be vain, let
 gratitude and interest concur to render us stedfast, immoveable,
 and continually active in his service.

SECT. XXXI.

The Apostle gives some advices relating to the proposed collection for the poor saints in Judea. 1 Cor. xvi. 1—12.

1 Cor. xvi. 1.

NOW concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

1 CORINTHIANS XVI. 1.

BEFORE I conclude this epistle, I must add a word or two concerning the collection which

SECT.
XXXI.

1 Cor.
xvi. 1.

you propose making for the poor saints which are in Judea, who are in such great straits both on account of the famine and the persecution to which they are exposed. And here I would only say this; as I have given it in charge to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye proceed: for nothing occurs to my thoughts at present, which can be more subservient to that generous and good design. When you hold your

2 Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

Christian assemblies on the first day of the week,^a in commemoration of the resurrection of our Lord, which has made that day sacred amongst us, let every one of you lay something by, in proportion to the degree in which, by the Divine blessing, he hath been prospered in his affairs; and let him bring it with him to the place where you meet for your public worship; then treasuring it up^b in the common stock, that so it may be ready in one sum, and there be no necessity of making any particular collections when I come. This will save us some trouble, at a time when we shall necessarily have so much important business on our hands; and when a little is added to the stock weekly, it may rise, by almost imperceptible degrees, to a greater sum than could perhaps be expected if the whole were to be deposited at once. But³ when I am arrived at Corinth, whomsoever ye shall appoint and recommend by your letters, signed by the congregation or its proper repre-

3 And when I come, whomsoever you shall approve by your letters, them

^a On the first day of the week.] So *τα μίαν σάββατον* signifies. Compare Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1. with Mat. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 2.

^b Treasuring it up: *ἐκαστος παρ' εαυτῷ κεισθῶ, ἰσοσυνέζων.*] We render it, let every one of you lay by him in store. But the following words show that it was to

be put into a common stock. The argument drawn from hence for the religious observation of the first day of the week in these primitive churches of Corinth and Galatia, is too obvious to need any farther illustration, and yet too important to be passed by in an entire silence.

SECT. sentatives, *them will I send to carry your fa-* will I send to bring
XXXI. *your to Jerusalem, and shall cheerfully intrust* your liberality unto
them to deliver it with their own hands to the Jerusalem.

1 Cor. xvi. 4. *And if it be thought convenient that I should also go up thither myself* 4 *And if it be meet*
on this occasion, they shall go with me; that that I go also, they
every thing may be conducted in the most shall go with me.

open and honourable manner, and that your
messengers may witness for me, that none of
the money has been employed to any purposes
whatsoever different from those for which it
was given.

5 *This, I hope, will quickly be dispatched; for* 5 *Now I will come*
I will, if Providence permit, come to you, when unto you, when I
I have passed through Macedonia; and I am just shall pass through
6 *upon my journey through Macedonia: And then* Macedonia: (for I do
perhaps may continue a while with you, and even pass through Mace-

spend the winter among you; that so, when I donia.)
6 *And it may be*
have made you as long a visit as my affairs will that I will abide,
admit, you may bring me forward on my journey yea, and winter with
to Jerusalem, or whithersoever else I shall go, you, that ye may
or through whatever parts I may pass to it; for bring me on my
that is a circumstance about which I am not yet journey whitherso-

determined, and in which I refer myself to the ever I go.

7 *future direction of Providence. I speak of my* 7 *For I will not see*
coming as at some distance; for though from you now by the way;
these maritime parts I might easily come to you but I trust to tarry
by sea, and so travel northward, when I have a while with you, if
dispatched my business at Corinth; I will not the Lord permit.

now see you in this manner, in my way; but hope

the little delay which this scheme may occasion

will be made up to your satisfaction: for I fully

purpose to spend some time with you, if the Lord

permit; which the necessities of the churches of

Macedonia will not at present give me leave to

8 *do. But I shall continue here at Ephesus till* 8 *But I will tarry*
about Pentecost,^c reserving the remainder of the at Ephesus until Pen-

tecost.

^c *I am just upon my journey through Ma-*

cedonia.] Thus I think we may justly

render Macedoniaν γαρ διερχομαι. Mace-

donia was not the direct way from Ephe-

sus to Corinth. It seems by his second

epistle to the Corinthians, written a few

months after this, that he was either in

Macedonia or on his way thither, (com-

pare 2 Cor. i. 16.) from whence it appears

that he had a secret purpose of seeing

Corinth in his way to as well as from

Macedonia; but he does not express this

purpose here, so that we know not how

it was signified to them, as from the text

last mentioned it seems that it was.

^d *Whithersoever else I go.] In the fore-*

cited text, Judea is mentioned; but St.

Paul does not seem to have fixed his

scheme so particularly, as yet.

^e *I shall continue at Ephesus till Pente-*

cost.] I look upon this as a very plain in-

timisation that he was now at Ephesus;

and consequently, that the inscription

added at the end of this epistle, which

9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

summer for my tour through Macedonia and the neighbouring parts. In the mean time, though I have spent so many months here, I am willing to make my stay as long as with any tolerable convenience I can; *for a great and effectual door of usefulness is opened to me under my apostolical character, in this populous and celebrated city, and [there are] many opposers* who may perhaps take the advantage of my absence to injure this new-planted church, on which I have bestowed so much labour, and for the interest of which I have the tenderest concern.^f

SECT.
XXXI.

1 Cor.
xvi. 9.

10 Now if Timothy come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.

But if, in the mean time, my beloved friend 10 and brother Timothy should come to you, see that he be with you without fear of any unkind usage, or of any attempt to set him up as the head of a party, as in some instances you have been ready to do by others; for as he is a man of a very tender and affectionate, so he is likewise of a very candid and humble spirit, and he laboureth in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ with great sincerity and zeal, as I also [do:] and we are in all respects so much in the same sentiments, that I am well assured the things which would grieve me in your conduct, would be equally disagreeable to him. And therefore, 11 though he be yet but a young man, (1 Tim. iv. 12.) let no man despise or make light of him; but, on the contrary, bring him forward on his journey in peace, and do all that you can to make it commodious and agreeable to him; that so he may come to me at Ephesus as soon as possible: for I expect him here with the other brethren,^g who are now the companions of his

11 Let no man therefore despise him; but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.

tells us it was written from Philippi, is very far from being authentic; and I hope it will be remembered, that no credit is to be given to any of these additions, which have been presumptuously made, and I think very imprudently retained.

[A great and effectual door is opened, &c.] Some think that here is an allusion to the door of the Circus, from whence chariots were let out when the races were to begin; and that the word *αντιπαρισται*, which I render *opposers*, signifies the same with *antagonist*, with whom the apostle was to contend as in a course. (Acts xix. 20, &c.) This opposition rendered his presence more necessary to preserve

those that were already converted, and to increase the number, if God should bless his ministry. Accordingly, a celebrated church was planted at Ephesus; and so far as we can learn from the tenor of his epistle to it, there was less to correct and reprove among them, than in most of the other churches to which he wrote.

[I expect him here with the brethren.] The original words are something ambiguous; but I have taken the sense which seemed most natural. Accordingly I think it probable that he came to Ephesus before St. Paul was driven out of it by the tumult; and that the apostle be-

SECT. journey, and who are all dear to me in the
XXXI. bonds of Christian love.

1 Cor.
xvi. 12.

But as for [our] brother Apollos, who is so well known to you, and for whom many of you have so high a regard, I am sorry to tell you that you are not at present to expect a visit from him. *I was indeed very importunate with him to come to you with Timothy and the other brethren; as I have an entire confidence both in his friendship and prudence, and hoped that whatever improper use has been made of his name in opposition to mine, (compare chap. i. 12, chap. iii. 4—6.) his presence among you might have been useful, just at this crisis. Nevertheless, he was by no means willing to come now, lest any advantage should be taken from that circumstance to inflame those divisions he would gladly do his utmost to allay: but he will come when he shall have a convenient opportunity; and you may assure yourselves that he retains a most cordial affection for you, and tender solicitude for your peace and prosperity.*

12 As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you, with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 1. LET ministers, from the example of the apostle, learn to be ready to promote charitable collections for the relief of poor Christians: and let them frequently exhort their hearers to do good and to communicate; reminding them, that their contributions ought to bear a proportion to the degree in which God has been pleased to prosper them.—We see an evident reference to the stated assemblies of the church on the first day of the week in this early age; and it is a proper duty of that day to devise and execute liberal things, according to our respective abilities.

The prudent caution of St. Paul as to the management of pecuniary affairs, is worthy the attention of the ministers of the gospel; and may teach them to take care, not only that they satisfy their own consciences in the fidelity of their transactions, but also that they provide things honest in the sight of all men. The apostle's courage in making the opposition he met with at Ephesus a reason for his continuance there, may instruct us not to study our own ease in the choice of our abode, but rather to

ing obliged to leave that city in so abrupt a manner, desired Timothy to stay a while after him, to settle the affairs of

that important church more completely than he had an opportunity of doing it. 1 Tim. i. 3.

prefer those circumstances, however disagreeable in themselves, wherein we may be providentially led to do most for the advancement of religion in the world. SECT. XXXI.

His care that his young friend Timothy might be as easy as possible, constitutes likewise a very amiable part of his character, and suggests, in a manner well worthy of notice, how careful private Christians should be that they do not terrify and distress the minds of those who are entering on the ministerial office. A faithful disposition to labour in the work of the Lord ought to command respect; yet sometimes, as in the instance of Apollos, even that diligence may be so liable to misrepresentation, that it may be the wisdom of ministers to absent themselves from places where they have many to caress and admire them. On the whole, the great business of life is to glorify God in doing our best for promoting the happiness of mankind; and no self-denial ought to seem hard to us, while we keep that glorious end in view. Ver. 10, 11

SECT. XXXII.

The apostle concludes with some particular salutations and directions; with general exhortations to courage and love, a solemn benediction to true Christians, and an awful denunciation against those that were destitute of love to Christ. 1 Cor. xvi. 13, to the end.

1 Cor. xvi. 13.

WATCH ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

1 CORINTHIANS XVI. 13.

NOW, my brethren, to conclude all, suffer a word of the most affectionate exhortation. Remember the situation in which you are, and with how many formidable enemies you are surrounded, and *be watchful* against all their assaults; *stand fast* in the profession of the Christian faith; *acquit yourselves* not like children, but as *men* of knowledge and fortitude; and *be strong*,^a in dependence on the best supports while you make that your constant care. SECT. XXXII.

1 Cor. xvi. 13.

14 Let all your And that you may not mistake this exhortation as breathing any thing of a contentious spirit, or fitted only for persons in military life, I would subjoin this necessary caution; *let all your af-* 14

^a Stand fast—acquit yourselves like men; be strong.] There is no need of seeking a different sense of each word. If there be any difference, ἀνδρίζεσθε may refer to a strength of resolution; παραιστοῦε, to

that cheerful and courageous expectation of a happy event, which the consciousness of so good a cause would naturally administer.

SECT. *fairs be transacted in mutual love, and under the influence of that noble principle of unfeigned benevolence which I have been so largely describing and recommending in the former part of this epistle. (See chap. xiii.)* things be done with charity.

1 Cor.
xvi. 14.

15 *And I farther beseech you, my brethren, that forasmuch as ye know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, he and they being among the first that were converted to Christianity in all your country, ye pay a proper regard to them; and so much the rather, as they have set themselves with peculiar resolution and care, according to the rank in which Providence has placed them, and the abilities which God hath given them, to the labour and charge of ministering to the saints.*^b 15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.)

16 *Now I would by all means inculcate it upon you, that you should in your respective ranks and circumstances of life subject yourselves to such, and not only pay them all due personal regard, but act as you have opportunity, in harmony with them; and that under their influence you should do your utmost for the good of your Christian brethren. And thus I would have you behave to every associate in that good work and labour in which they are engaged; especially to those who are honoured with the ministerial office.* 16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us and laboureth.

17 *I could not but rejoice greatly at the arrival and presence of that worthy person I have just mentioned, that is Stephanas, and of Fortunatus^c and Achaicus, who accompanied him; because they filled up your deficiency with respect to me, and gave me by their converse and friendly offices that consolation which I might justly have expected from you all, had I enjoyed an opportunity of conversing with you, and about which I could, for your own sakes, wish that some of you had been more solicitous.* 17 I am glad of the coming of Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part, they have supplied.

18 *For they refreshed my spirit greatly by their obliging behaviour and edifying conversation;* 18 For they have refreshed my spirit

^b *They have set themselves, &c.]* This seems to imply that it was the generous care of the whole family to assist their fellow-Christians, so that there was not a member of it which did not do its part.

^c *Fortunatus.]* This worthy man sur-

vived St. Paul a considerable time; for it appears from the epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, (§ 59,) that he was the messenger of the church at Corinth to that of Rome, by whom Clement sent back that invaluable epistle.

and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.

as I doubt not but they have often refreshed **SECT. XXXII.**
yours by their ministrations among you. Therefore I must again urge it upon you, that you pay all proper regard to such, and treat them on every occasion with such respect and affection as so worthy a character well deserves. **1 Cor. xvi. 18.**

19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

I must now tell you, that the churches of the 19 provincial Asia, which lie about Ephesus, and with whom I have frequent opportunities of corresponding, salute you with all Christian affection; heartily wishing you peace and prosperity. Your good friends Aquila and Priscilla,^d who have made so long an abode among you, and are now providentially brought hither, most affectionately salute you in the bowels of our common Lord. And with these tokens of respect receive those of the church in their house, as you know their family is happy in a large

20 All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

number of Christian members. But I will not 20 enter into a more particular detail of names; for your society is so celebrated, and esteemed of so great importance to the Christian interest, that I may truly say that all the brethren salute you. Entertain therefore that affection for each other, which those that are almost strangers bear to you, and salute one another with an holy kiss; but let it be as cordially sincere as I doubt not but it will be decent.

21 The salutation of me Paul, with mine own hand.

I have hitherto used the assistance of a friend 21 to write what I dictated to him; but in order to assure you that this epistle is genuine, I here add the salutation of [me] Paul, your well-known minister and father in the gospel, with my own hand; most cordially wishing you every blessing, both temporal and spiritual. And let me here 22

22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him

add, (that being thus written with my own pen, it may have the greater weight :) If there be any man amongst you, or elsewhere, who under the specious forms of Christianity loveth not the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, but maintains a secret alienation of heart from him while he calls himself his servant, preferring any

^d Aquila and Priscilla.] They had formerly made some abode at Corinth; and there St. Paul's acquaintance with them commenced. Acts xviii. 1, 2. It is therefore no wonder they were parti-

cular in their salutations.—Some copies add παρ' οἷς ξενίζουμαι, with whom also I lodge; but the authority of those manuscripts is small.

SECT. interest of his own to that of his Divine Master; be Anathema, Ma-
 XXXII. *let him be Anathema, Maranatha:*^e such an one ranatha.

1 Cor.
 xvi. 22.

is indeed worthy of the most dreadful curse, and if he persist in such a wretched temper, it will certainly fall upon him. And let him be assured, that though his crime be of such a nature as not to admit human conviction and censure; yet it is known to him whose eyes are as a flame of fire, so that he searches the hearts and trieth the reins. And ere long, the Lord himself will come in awful pomp, to execute vengeance upon him, pronouncing him accursed before the assembled world, and devoting him to utter and everlasting destruction.

23 But it is my hearty prayer that no such root of bitterness and heir of misery may be found among you; and that it may not, may *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ [be] with you*, and all the blessed tokens and effects of his favour rest upon you, for time and eternity!

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

24 Be assured that in what I have here said I intend nothing in the least unkind to any single person among you. Far from that, *my tenderest and most affectionate love [be] with you all in Christ Jesus;*^f depend therefore upon my con-

24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

^e *Anathema—Maranatha.*] Among the many various interpretations of these words, none seems to me so probable and satisfactory as this—when the Jews lost the power of life and death, they used nevertheless to pronounce an anathema on persons who, according to the Mosaic law, should have been executed; and such a person became an anathema, or cherem, or accursed; for the expressions are equivalent. They had a full persuasion that the curse would not be in vain; and indeed it appears they expected some judgment correspondent to that which the law pronounced would befall the offender; for instance, that a man to be stoned, would be killed by the falling of a stone or other heavy body upon him; a man to be strangled, would be choked; or one whom the law sentenced to the flames, would be burnt in his house; and the like. Now to express their faith, that God would one way or another, and probably in some remarkable manner, interpose, to add that efficacy to his own sentence which they could not give it; it is very probable they might use the word

Maranatha, that is, in Syriac, *the Lord cometh*, or he will surely and quickly come to put this sentence into execution, and to show that the person on whom it falls is indeed *anathema*, *accursed*. In beautiful allusion to this, when the apostle was speaking of a secret alienation from Christ, maintained under the forms of Christianity, (which might perhaps be the case among many of the Corinthians, and much more probably may be so among us,) as this was not a crime capable of being convicted and censured in the Christian church, he reminds them that the Lord Jesus Christ will come at length and find it out, and punish it in a proper manner. This weighty sentence the apostle chose to write with his own hand, and insert between his general salutation and benediction, that it might be the more attentively regarded. Compare Grot. on Rom. v. 13. and Isa. xiv. 20. Bishop Patrick on Deut. xxvii. 15.

^f *My love [be] with you all in Christ Jesus.*] When we consider what an alienation of affection some of these Corinthians had expressed with respect to the

stant readiness to do all in my power for promoting and establishing the Christian interest among you: and may it flourish more and more, till your happiness be completed in the kingdom of God above. *Amen.*

SECT.
XXXII.
1 Cor.
xvi. 24.

IMPROVEMENT.

HOWEVER the particular trials of Christians may vary in different ages, the same works, in general, demand their diligence; the same enemies, their watchfulness; the same difficulties, their courage and fortitude: nor will they ever be more likely to perform, to resist, and to endure well, than when charity reigns in their hearts, and presides over the whole of their behaviour.

We owe our humble thanks to the author of all good, when he raises up the spirits of his servants to any distinguished activity and zeal in his cause. Christians of standing superior to their brethren, ought to emulate such a character; and when they do so with genuine marks of becoming modesty and upright views, let all proper respect be paid to them; especially to those who are honoured with, and labour faithfully in, the ministerial office. To such let others submit themselves in love; not indeed as to the lords of their faith, which even the apostles pretended not to be; but as friends, whom they esteem and reverence, ever tenderly solicitous to secure their comfort and increase their usefulness.

We see how much the apostle was concerned to promote mutual friendship among the disciples of our blessed Redeemer; how kindly he delivers the salutations of one and another. It becomes us to remember each other with cordial regard, and, in imitation of his wise example, to do all we can to cultivate a good understanding among our Christian brethren, and to abhor that disposition to sow discord, which has been so fatally successful in producing envyings and strife, and every evil work.

To conclude all; let us lay up in our memory, and often review, this awful sentence, this Anathema, Maranatha, which, to give it the greater weight, the apostle records with his own hand. Let it ever be remembered, that professing Christians, who do not sincerely love their Master, lie under the heaviest curse which an apostle can pronounce or a God inflict. Let the unhappy creatures take the alarm, and labour to obtain a more ingenuous temper, ere the Lord, whom they neglect, and against whom they entertain a secret enmity, descend from hea-

apostle, this expression of tender regard to them all without any exception, is so much the more affectionate; but it would not have been agreeable to the generous spirit which dictated it, to have glanced too plainly on that circumstance in the paraphrase.

SECT. ven with unsupportable terror, and pronounce the anathema
XXXII. with his own lips, in circumstances which shall for ever cut off
all hope and all possibility of its being reversed. If his solemn
voice pronounce, his almighty hand will immediately execute it.
How will they be cast down to destruction, as in a moment!
How will they be utterly consumed with terrors! To pre-
vent so dreadful an end of our high profession, of our tow-
Ver. 23. ering hopes, may the grace of our Jesus Christ be with
us! Amen.

THE END OF THE FAMILY EXPOSITOR ON THE FIRST EPISTLE
TO THE CORINTHIANS.

THE
FAMILY EXPOSITOR:
OR,
A PARAPHRASE
ON THE
SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE
CORINTHIANS;
*WITH CRITICAL NOTES,
AND A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF EACH SECTION.*

X

[The following text is extremely faint and illegible, appearing to be a list or index of names and titles in a non-Latin script, possibly Chinese or Japanese.]

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

Paraphrase and Notes

ON THE

SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

THE first epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians was written, as hath been before observed, from Ephesus, about the year of our Lord 57, towards the end of his continuance there and in the neighbouring parts. (See Vol. III. sect. 44, note a.) Upon leaving Ephesus the apostle removed to Troas, which was situated on the shore of the Ægean Sea, in the expectation of meeting Titus, and receiving an account of the success with which he hoped his former epistle had been attended, and of the present state of the Corinthian church; (2 Cor. ii. 12.) but not meeting him there, (ver. 13,) he proceeded to Macedonia, where he obtained his desired interview, and received satisfaction concerning the promising state of affairs at Corinth. From this place the apostle wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians, intrusting it to the care of Titus, who was returning to Corinth, to forward the collection intended for the poor Christians in Judea. From these historical circumstances, the date of this second epistle must be fixed within a year after the former. (See Vol. III. sect. 45, note b.)

In the introduction to the First Epistle, we observed, that its design was to rectify some sad disorders and abuses which had crept into the church at Corinth; and

answer their queries upon some important points in which they had desired his determination. The intention of the present epistle is, in general, to illustrate some of the same points upon which he had discoursed in the former, according to the light which Titus had given him into the circumstances and temper of the Corinthian church; interspersing and enforcing some occasional reflections and advices upon various subjects, as he thought most conducive to their instruction and edification.

But to give a more distinct view of the scheme and contents of this Second Epistle.—The apostle, after a general salutation, expresses his grateful sense of the Divine goodness in preserving him from the dangers to which he had been exposed in Asia; professing his unshaken confidence in God's continued guardianship, supported by a sense of his own integrity: (Chap. i. 1—12.) Which declaration of his integrity he farther illustrates; applying it particularly to those views on which he had declined the visit to Corinth, which in the former epistle he seems to have promised. (Ver. 13, to the end.) The case of the unhappy person who had committed incest with his father's wife, and whom, upon account of the scandal he had brought upon his Christian profession, the apostle directed them to exclude from communion, had made a deep impression on his mind. This, he intimates, was the reason of his having deferred his visit to Corinth, that he might not meet them with grief, nor till he had received advice of the effect of his apostolical admonitions, and their salutary and seasonable discipline. The affection of the apostle to the Corinthians is here manifested, both in his sympathy with the offending member of their church while under censure, whom now, being penitent, he advises them to readmit to their communion; and also in his solicitude for certain tidings concerning their welfare by Titus, whom not finding at Troas, (as before observed,) he went to meet in Macedonia. (Chap. ii. 1—15.)

In farther vindication and support of his apostolical character against the insinuations and objections of the false teachers at Corinth, the apostle, having just intimat-

ed that a large door of success had been opened to him at Troas and elsewhere, makes a transition to this subject; and expresses in the most affectionate terms his thanksgiving to God for having intrusted him with the ministry of the gospel, and for the success attending his services; declaring his lively confidence, in all events, of the Divine acceptance, and speaking of the Corinthians as his credentials written by the finger of God. (Ver. 14, to the end; chap. iii. 1—6.) And as an illustration of the dignity of the ministerial office, he descants, in a very pertinent and judicious manner, on the comparative obscurity of the Mosaic law, and the superior glory and permanence of the gospel. (Ver. 7, to the end.) He then disclaims all sinister views and distrust of success, in pursuing the glorious ministry he had described, from a firm persuasion that such a gospel could not be rejected but in consequence of the most fatal prejudices. (Chap. iv. 1—6.) And while he acknowledges his own infirmities, he glories in the strength communicated to him from God, as an effectual support under the extremest trials; (ver. 7—15.) describing the glorious hopes which he entertained beyond the grave, as a ground of triumph in the face of danger, and a noble incentive to persevering fidelity and steadfastness. (Ver. 16, to the end; chap. v. 1—10.) Touching again upon the ardour with which he prosecuted the gospel ministry, he makes a kind of apology for it, pleading the irresistible constraints of the Redeemer's love, and the infinite importance of the overtures of reconciliation; which in a most pathetic address he urges the Corinthians to embrace. (Ver. 11, to the end; chap. vi. 1, 2.) And then expatiates with great copiousness on the temper with which, in the midst of afflictions and persecutions, he and his brethren executed their important embassy. (Ver. 3—10.)

It is easy to observe, on the most cursory view of this argument, with what delicacy, as well as energy, it is all along conducted. As the apostle manages his subject in the tenderest and most affectionate manner, and intermingles general reflections for the instruction and consolation of the Corinthians, which, however, had an

evident subservience to his main design; he conciliates their regard, and fixes the impressions which his former Epistle had made, in a more insinuating and therefore more effectual way, than if he had exerted his authority, and wrote with more closeness and severity of style. And having been informed by Titus, that the defence of his mission, and apology for his conduct, contained in his former Epistle, had not been utterly in vain, he manifests his satisfaction in the present disposition of the Corinthians, by giving his reasonings upon this head a more diffusive and practical turn.

After this, the Epistle affords us a farther instance of his affection, in his judicious and pathetic exhortation to the Corinthians, (additional to what he had formerly said, when they desired his opinion upon the head of marriage,) to avoid those alliances or intermarriages with idolaters, which might tend to ensnare them; pleading the gracious promises of God to his people as an engagement to the strictest purity, and as a motive to aspire after the sublimest attainments in religion. (Ver. 11, to the end; chap. vii. 1.)

From this digression he returns to the subject he had before been treating; and to remove any degree of prejudice which might yet lurk in their breasts against his apostolical character, he appeals to them for the integrity and disinterestedness of his conduct; professing that the freedom he uses was not intended to reproach their diffidence, but sprung from an unfeigned and ardent concern for their welfare; which he illustrates by the pleasure with which he received the assurances of their good state by Titus, and the part he had taken in their sorrows, which his necessary reproofs had occasioned, and by his present joy, in that those sorrows had happily issued in their reformation. (Ver. 2, to the end.)

The apostle had proposed to the Corinthians, in the close of the former Epistle, their making a contribution for the relief of the poor saints in Judea: resuming the subject, he recommends to them the example of the Macedonians, reminds them of the grace of our blessed Redeemer, and gives some advices as to the manner of collecting and transmitting their bounty: (Chap. viii.

1—13.) Expressing his joy for the readiness of Titus to assist in finishing the collection, and making an honourable mention of the worthy character of other Christian brethren, whom he had joined with him in the same commission. (Ver. 16, to the end.) He then, with admirable address, further urges their liberal contribution, and, in a full assurance of its success, recommends them to the Divine blessing. (Chap. ix. throughout.)

Having expressed in the former part of the epistle, and on occasion of this contribution, his confidence in the abundant grace which had been bestowed on the Corinthians, the apostle takes an opportunity of stating and obviating some reflections which some among them had thrown upon him for the mildness of his conduct, as if it proceeded from fear. He therefore asserts his apostolical power and authority; cautioning his opponents that they should not urge him to give too sensible demonstrations of it upon themselves. (Chap. x. throughout.) And further vindicates himself from the perverse insinuations of such as opposed him at Corinth; particularly on the head of his having declined to receive a contribution from the church for his maintenance; which, though greatly to his honour, was by his opposers ungenerously turned to his disadvantage. (Chap. xi. 1—15.) To magnify his office as an apostle, he commemorates his labours and sufferings in the cause of Christ; yet in such a manner as plainly shows it was disagreeable, however necessary it might be, to dwell on a subject that appeared like sounding his own applause. (Ver. 16, to the end.) And with great clearness and plainness, yet at the same time with equal reluctance and modesty, he gives a detail of some extraordinary revelations which he had received from God, and of his experience of those Divine aids which taught him to glory in his own infirmities. (Chap. xii. 1—10.) And upon the whole, vindicates the undisguised openness and sincerity of his conduct, and his visible superiority to secular considerations, in all his carriage towards the church at Corinth. (Ver. 11, to the end.) Closing his epistle with the tenderest assurances, how much it would grieve him to be obliged

to evince his apostolical power by inflicting any miraculous punishment on those who continued to oppose him; and then subjoining the most respectful salutations, and his solemn benediction. (Chap. xiii. throughout.)

It is evident from this view of the epistle, that a very large part of it is employed in reclaiming the Corinthian church from their undue attachment to Judaizing teachers, and from that party-spirit into which they had fallen; and in rekindling proper regards to the unadulterated doctrine of the gospel, and to his own apostolical counsels, who had been their spiritual father in Christ. That this leading design of the apostle is occasionally interrupted by the introduction of other matters, and particularly the subject of the contribution for the poor saints in Judea, will be no objection, I apprehend, if narrowly examined, to the accuracy and beauty of this excellent composition; for the transitions which St. Paul makes, arise from some obvious and important sentiments, which render them natural and just. And there is an admirable wisdom in such digressions, as they relieve the minds of the Corinthians from that painful uneasiness which they must have felt from a constant attention to so disagreeable a subject; I mean their unsuitable conduct towards the apostle himself. It is with the same kind of propriety and sagacity that the severe intimations which the dignity of the apostolic character obliged St. Paul to drop against those who might persevere in their opposition, are reserved to the close of the epistle; as they would fall with additional weight, in all probability, after their minds had been softened with the reiterated expressions of his tender affection to the Corinthians in general, and the innocence and amiableness of his character had been represented in such a variety of views.

Paraphrase and Notes

ON THE

SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

SECT. I.

The Apostle Paul, after a general salutation, expresses his grateful sense of the Divine goodness, in preserving him from the dangers to which he had been exposed in Asia; professing his unshaken confidence in God's continued guardianship, supported by the consciousness of his integrity before him. 2 Cor. i. 1—12.

2 Cor. i. 1.

PAUL, an apostle of
Jesus Christ by
the will of God, and
Timothy *our* brother,

2 CORINTHIANS I. 1.

YOU receive this epistle from *Paul*, who hath the honour to call himself *an apostle of Jesus Christ by the sovereign will of God*; who hath shown by the victory of his grace over me, how able he is to bend the most obdurate and reluctant will to his own purposes, and triumph over the opposition of the most obstinate heart. *And Timothy, a beloved brother*^a in

SECT.

I.

2 Cor.
i. 1.

^a *Timothy, a beloved brother.*] This shows that Timothy was returned to St. Paul since he wrote the last epistle; and his joining the name of Timothy with his own, is an instance of the generous desire which St. Paul had to establish, as much as possible, the reputation and in-

fluence of this excellent young minister. Some have thought this is the reason why the apostle so often speaks in the *plural* number in this epistle; but it is certain he often speaks in the *singular*, and that there are passages here, as well as in the epistle to the Thessalonians, in which he

SECT. Christ Jesus, joins with me in this second address to the church of God that is in Corinth;

unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia;

whom he hath mercifully called out from the world and united to himself. A society for which I have always the tenderest regard; the respective members of which I now most cordially salute; *with all* who, by their Christian profession, are numbered among the saints that

2 are in the whole region of Achaia. I greet you, as I do all my brethren in such addresses: saying from my heart, May grace and peace [be] in rich abundance communicated to you all, from God our Father, the compassionate Source of universal goodness, and from the Lord Jesus Christ; through whom alone such invaluable blessings can be conveyed to such sinful creatures as we are. While I sit down to write to you, my dear brethren, in the midst of circumstances which the world might think very deplorable, (compare 1 Cor. iv. 9, &c.) I cannot forbear bursting out into the language of joy and praise,^b for such a variety of Divine favours as is conferred on myself and you. Blessed, for ever blessed, by the united songs of men and angels, [be] the great God and father of our beloved Lord and gracious Saviour Jesus Christ, through whom we have this free access to him, this secure interest in him: so that we can now, with unutterable delight, view him as the Father of mercies, from whose paternal compassion all our comforts and hopes are derived; and as the God of all consolation, whose nature it is ever to have mercy, and who knows how to proportion his supports to the exigence of every trial.

2 Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

4 For ever adored be this benevolent and compassionate Being, who comforteth us in all our pressing tribulation,^c by such seasonable appear-

4 Who comforteth us in all our tri-

uses the plural, without intending to include Timothy. See chap. iii. 1—3; chap. vii. 5; chap. xii. 19; 2 Thess. ii. 1—9. He also joins the name of Sosthenes with his own, in the former epistle, as also the name of Timothy to the epistle to the Philippians and Colossians; yet does not use the plural there.

^b Cannot forbear bursting out, &c.] It is very observable that eleven of St. Paul's thirteen epistles begin with excla-

mations of joy, praise and thanksgiving. As soon as he thought of a Christian church planted in one place or another, there seems to have been a flow of most lively affection accompanying the idea, in which all sensibility of his temporal affliction or theirs was all swallowed up, and the fulness of his heart must vent itself in such cheerful, exalted, and devout language.

^c Comforteth us.] It is certain that

bulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

6 And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation.

7 And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing that as you are

ances in our favour. And this, I know, is not merely for our own sakes, but *that we, taught by our own experience, may be able, in the most tender, suitable, and effectual manner, to comfort those who are in any tribulation, by the communication of that comfort whereby we ourselves are comforted of God;*^d and methinks every support I feel is much endeared to me by the consideration, that the benefit of it may be reflected upon others. *Because as the sufferings we endure in the cause of Christ, and in conformity to his example, abound with respect to us, so our consolation by Christ, the comforts which arise from God in him, does abound much more, and quite overbalance the distress.*

And much of this satisfaction to us arises from the hope we have with relation to you, my dear friends and Christian brethren; *for whether we be afflicted, [it is,] we doubt not, in subservience to the views of your present consolation, and your future and eternal salvation; which is so much the more effectually wrought out, by the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also undergo, and which by our example you are taught the less to wonder at, and to bear with the greater fortitude: or whether we be comforted, [it is] still with the same view, for your consolation and salvation; that your eternal happiness may be promoted by those comforts which we are enabled to communicate to you with the greater efficacy. And our hope concerning you, that this will be the happy end of all, [is] stedfast and cheerful:*^e *knowing that as ye are*

the mention of these experiences must have a powerful tendency to conciliate the regard of the Corinthians to St. Paul; and such an introduction to his epistle as the whole of this is, must naturally prejudice them strongly in his favour; yet this does not seem to have been by any means his aim, nor is there any appearance of art in it; but all is the genuine overflowing of an heart which rejoiced in the consolations of the gospel felt by itself, and communicated to others. See verse 12, which is much illustrated by this connexion.

^d *Comforted of God.*] Some think this refers particularly to the comfort which the repentance of the incestuous person

gave St. Paul, after the affliction he had endured on his account; (compare chap. vii. 7;) but it seems more natural to understand it of the general consolation arising from the pardon of sin, an interest in God, an assurance that nothing should separate him from Christ, that afflictions should co-operate for his advantage, and that a crown of glory heightened by these trials should close the scene. On these topics he frequently insists in his epistles, and none can be more important and delightful.

^e *Our hope concerning you is stedfast.*] These words, in several good manuscripts, are put in connexion with the first clause of the 6th verse; and so the version will

SECT.

I.

2 Cor.

i. 4.

SECT. *partakers of the sufferings to which we refer, so* partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye be*
 I. *you also have already, in some degree, your* also of the consolation.
 share of the consolation which arises from prin-

2 Cor. principles and hopes which are not peculiar to us,
 i. 7. who are apostles, or inferior ministers of the gospel, but common to all sincere believers; in which number I persuade myself that you in the general are.

8 We write thus concerning the trials of the Christian life, having so lately experienced them in a large measure: *for we would not have you, our dear brethren, ignorant concerning our affliction, which within these few months beset us in Asia,*⁸ and particularly at Ephesus; *that we were exceedingly pressed with it, even beyond our power; so that we despaired of being able even to live any longer, and were looked upon by others*

⁸ For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:

9 as dead men. *And not only did others apprehend this concerning us, but we ourselves did indeed think that the appointed end of our ministry and life was come; and had, as it were, received the sentence of death in ourselves, the execution of which we were continually expecting; but the event showed that it was wisely appointed by Divine Providence to make our deliverance the more remarkable; and that we might learn for the future not to trust in ourselves, nor merely to regard human probabilities, but in the greatest extremities to repose a cheerful confidence in the power and providence of*

9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God,

run thus: *Whether we be afflicted, it is in subservience to your consolation and salvation, which is effectually wrought out by the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also undergo; and our hope concerning you is stedfast: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation; knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so also of the consolation.* And the repetition of the words *consolation and salvation*, shows how agreeable the thought was to him; so that he loved to speak of it again and again.

¹ *The afflictions which beset us in Asia.* Mr. Cradock thinks that here he begins to apologize for not coming to Corinth, and introduces these troubles as an excuse for not seeing them. I think it is rather to be connected with the preceding discourse. Yet still it might incline them to drop their complaints, and judge more

favourably of him, when they considered in what painful and dangerous circumstances he had, on the present openings of duty, been spending that time in which they had been expecting him at Corinth. As for the *afflictions* here spoken of, some have thought that this may refer to the persecutions at Lystra, where St. Paul's danger had been so extreme, and he had been recovered by miracle; (Acts xiv. 19, 20.) but as that happened so long before the visit to Corinth, in which he planted the church there, (Acts xviii. 1.) it seems more probable that he either refers to some opposition which he met with in his journey through Galatia and Phrygia, (Acts xviii. 23,) of which no particular account has reached us; or to what happened at Ephesus, (Acts xix. 29, 30.) which is Dr. Whitby's opinion.

which raiseth the dead :

10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us :

11 Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons, thanks may be given by many on our behalf.

12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards.

that God who raiseth the dead, at his holy pleasure, by his omnipotent word: *Who rescued us, on this ever-memorable occasion, from so great a death as then threatened us, and doth rescue us from every danger which now surrounds us, and in whom we trust that he will make our deliverance complete, and still rescue us from every evil, and preserve us to his heavenly kingdom.*

I say that I have this confidence in God's continual care; and it is the more cheerful, as I persuade myself you are and will be *working together in prayer for us, that so the favour [obtained] for us by the importunate prayers of many, may be acknowledged by the thanksgiving of many on our account;*^s as nothing can be more reasonable than that mercies obtained by prayer should be owned in praise. And this confidence which we have both towards God and you, is much emboldened, as we have an inward assurance of our own integrity, however men may suspect or censure us: *for this is still our rejoicing, which no external calamities can impair or injuries destroy, even the testimony of our conscience in the sight of God, who searcheth the secrets of all hearts, that in simplicity^h and godly sincerity, maintaining perpetually that sense of the Divine presence and inspection which is the surest guard upon unfeigned integrity, and not with that carnal wisdom which is so ungenerously and unrighteously imputed to us, but by the grace of God, and such sentiments of fidelity and benevolence as that blessed principle inspires, we have had, and still continue to have, our conversation in the world; and more especially towards you,*ⁱ with respect

SECT.

I.

2 Cor.
i. 10.

^s *That so the favour obtained, &c.]* There is something very perplexed and ambiguous in the structure of this sentence. I have sometimes thought it might be rendered, that (ὅπερ ἡμῶν) *on our account thanks may be rendered by many persons for* (το εἰς ἡμᾶς χάρισμα,) *the gift, or miraculous endowment, which is in us or deposited with us, (διὰ πολλῶν,) for the sake of many:* as if he had said, That many may join with us in returning thanks for those miraculous endowments which were lodged with me, not for my

own sake, but for the benefit of many. This would be a sentiment worthy an apostle; but the rendering in the paraphrase seemed, on the whole, the most natural and simple; especially as διὰ, with a genitive, seldom, if ever, signifies *for the sake*, but rather *by the means of* any afterwards mentioned.

^h *Simplicity, plain-heartedness.]* Not only meaning well on the whole, but declining an over-artful way of prosecuting a good end.

ⁱ *Especially towards you.]* His working

SECT. to whom, in some circumstances of opposition
 I. that have happened among you, we have been
 2 Cor. peculiarly obliged to watch over our conduct;
 i. 12. lest inadvertency should in any instance give
 an handle to the malice of our enemies, to exert
 itself in strengthening prejudices against
 us, and destroying those fruits of our labours
 among you, for which we could not but be
 greatly concerned.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 1. LET the venerable title of saints, by which the apostle so often describes and addresses Christians, be ever retained in our minds; that we may remember the obligations we are under to answer it, as we would avoid the guilt and infamy of lying to God and men, by falsely and hypocritically professing the best religion, very possibly to the worst, undoubtedly to the vainest purposes. And that we may be excited to a sanctity becoming
 3 this title, let us often think of God, as the Father of mercies, and as the God of all consolation; and let us think of him as assuming these titles under the character of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: so shall we find our hearts more powerfully engaged to love and trust in him, and enter into a more intimate acquaintance and frequent converse with him.

4 From him let us seek consolation in every distress; considering those supports which we so experience, not as given for ourselves alone, but for others; that we, on the like principles, may comfort them. Let ministers, in particular, regard them in this view, and rejoice in those tribulations which may render them more capable of comforting such as are in any trouble, by those consolations with which they themselves have been comforted by God; that so the church may be edified, and God
 11 glorified in all, by the thanksgiving of many, for mercies obtained in answer to united prayers.

Let us particularly remember the support which St. Paul experienced when he was pressed above measure, and as it seemed, quite beyond his strength, so as to despair of life, and received the sentence of death in himself; as what was wisely appointed to teach him a firmer confidence in God, who raiseth the dead. Strong as his faith was, it admitted of farther degrees; and the improvement of it was a happy equivalent for all the extremities he suffered. He therefore glories, as secure of being rescued from future dangers. Nor was his faith vain, though he afterwards

with his own hands for his maintenance, where do, must be a convincing proof among the Corinthians, (Acts xviii. 3; of this. 1 Cor. ix. 15,) which he did not every-

fell by the hand of his enemies, and seemed as helpless a prey SECT. I.
 to their malice and rage as any of the multitudes whose blood
 Nero, or the instruments of his cruelty, poured out like water.
 Death is itself the grand rescue to a good man, which bears him
 to a state of everlasting security; and in this sense every believer Ver. 10.
 may adopt the apostle's words, and while he acknowledges past
 and present, may assuredly boast of future deliverances.

Happy shall we therefore be, if by Divine grace we are enabled at all times to maintain the temper and conduct of Christians; and may confidently rejoice in the testimony of our consciences, that our conversation in the world is in simplicity and godly sincerity; that our ends in religion are great and noble; 12 that our conduct is simple and uniform; in a word, that we act as in the sight of an heart-searching God. Then may we look upon the applauses or the censures of men as comparatively a very light matter; and may rest assured if, as with regard to the apostle in the instance before us, he suffers a malignant breath for a while to obscure the lustre of our character, the day is near which will reveal it in unclouded glory.

SECT. II.

The apostle goes on solemnly to declare his general integrity; and particularly applies that declaration to the views on which he had declined that visit to Corinth which he had intimated an intention of making.
 2 Cor. i. 13, to the end.

2 COR. I. 13.

2 CORINTHIANS I. 13.

FOR we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end:

I SPEAK of the integrity with which I have conducted myself among you, with great SECT. II.
 freedom; *for we write no other things to you on this head, but what ye well know,^a and must be obliged to acknowledge; and I hope that ye will have equal cause to acknowledge [them,] even unto the end;* for by the Divine grace you shall never have just cause to speak or think dishonourably of us, or to reflect upon any inconsistency in our behaviour. *As indeed ye have already acknowledged us in part; you have ac-* 2 Cor. i. 13.
 14 *knowledge that you have had no occasion of blaming us; for though some among you are not so ready to do us justice as the rest are, yet*

14 As also you have acknowledged us in part, that we

^a *What ye know.*] The word *αναγινωσκω* is ambiguous, and may signify either to acknowledge, to know, or to read; but I think the sense here plainly determines it to *knowing*.

SECT. most avow it with pleasure and thankfulness, are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.
 II. that we are your boasting, and that ye have cause to glory in your relation to us; as ye also in this respect (with humble gratitude to the great author of all our successes be it ever spoken,) [are] ours now, and will, I trust, be so in the great day of the Lord Jesus; when we hope to present you before Christ as the seals of our ministry, and to lead you on to that heavenly kingdom, in the faithful pursuit of which we have already been so happy as to engage you.

2 Cor.
 i. 14.

15 And in this confidence I was long before desirous of coming to you, and enjoying another interview with friends who have long lain so near my heart: that the expected transports of that blessed day might in some degree be anticipated, both on my part and on yours; and accordingly would have come to you much sooner, not only on my own account, but likewise that ye might have had a second benefit; as I doubted not but it would have been much to your advantage, as well as have given you a great deal of joy, to have seen and conversed with your father in Christ, who had once been so dear and so welcome to you. And indeed my scheme was to pass by you into Macedonia, and make you a short visit^b in my way thither; and then having despatched my business in the churches there, to come to you again from Macedonia, and make a longer stay; that so I might be brought forward by you in my journey toward Judea, when I shall go thither to deliver the money raised by the contribution of the Gentile Christians for their Jewish brethren, when they shall

15 And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that you might have a second benefit:

16 And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judea.

^b Make you a short visit.] δι' ὁδὸν διελθεῖν εἰς Μακεδονίαν some have understood of going into Macedonia without calling on them in his way. But as he went from Ephesus to Macedonia, it was not his direct way to go by Corinth; especially considering the road we know he did take, by Troas; and if he were now in Macedonia, as I think there is great reason to believe he was, there would on that interpretation have been no such appearance of change in his purpose as should have needed any apology. I therefore conclude that his first scheme was to

have made them two visits, the one in his way to Macedonia, (perhaps sailing from Ephesus to Corinth,) and then another and longer, in his return. This the word παλιν, again, seems to intimate; and if this were his purpose, it was now plain, in fact, that he had changed it. The grand objection against this is 1 Cor. xvi. 7, which can only be reconciled by a supposition, that he had altered his purpose between the date of that epistle and his quitting Ephesus; and had given them, perhaps by some verbal message, some intimation of it.

meet at Jerusalem on occasion of some of their great feasts. (See Acts xx. 16.)

SECT. II.

17 When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea, yea, and nay, nay?

Now when I intended this, did I use levity in projecting my scheme, or throwing it aside on any trifling occasion? Or the things which I purpose in general, do I purpose according to the flesh, according to carnal principles and views; that I should be continually changing my measures in the prospect of every little interest that may lead one way or another, and breaking my word, so that there should be with me yea, yea, and nay, nay: such an uncertainty and inconsistency of counsels and actions, that none should know how to depend upon me, or

2 Cor. i. 17.

18 But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.

what they had to expect from me? No: I solemnly protest that [as] the God whom I serve [is] faithful, our word to you on other occasions, and on this, hath not been wavering and uncertain, sometimes yea and sometimes nay; but that I have always maintained a consistency of behaviour, the natural attendant of sincerity and truth, which is always uniform and invariable. For our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, 19

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me, and Silvanus, and Timothy, who joined our labours among you, (Acts xviii. 15.) as we now join in writing to you this epistle, (according to what I observed in the inscription of it,) was not yea and nay; Christ and his gospel were not inconsistent and contradictory, but in him all was yea: as he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, the declarations of his word and the engagements of his

covenant are inviolably the same. For all the many and invaluable precious promises of God which are given us by this covenant and established in his blood, [are] in him yea, and in him amen.^c They are now attended with stipu-

20 For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him

^c In him yea, and in him amen.] Nothing can really render the promises of God more certain than they are; but God's giving them to us through Christ, assures us that they are indeed his promises, as in Christ there is such a real evidence of his conversing with men, and as the wonders which God hath actually wrought in the incarnation, life, resurrection, and ascension of his Son, (facts in themselves much stranger than

any of the glorious consequences to follow,) tend greatly to confirm our faith, and make it easier for us to believe such illustrious promises as those which are given us, the very greatness of which it might otherwise have been an impediment to our faith, and have created a suspicion, not whether God would have performed what he had promised, but whether such promises were really given us.

SECT. lations and engagements which may be sufficient to confirm the weakest faith, when we consider what an astonishing way God has been pleased to take for the communication of mercy by his Son; so that the more we attend to them, the more we shall see of their invariable truth and certainty; and all tends to the glory of God by us, which we constantly make the end of our administration, and so are animated to maintain one regular series of uniform truth, as in his sight and presence.

2 Cor.
i. 20.

- 21 But we say not this as arrogating any thing to ourselves; for we must readily acknowledge that *he who also by his strengthening grace confirmeth and establisheth us,^d together with you, in the faith and love of Christ, and he that hath anointed us*, as a kind of first-fruits of his creatures, with that Spirit which gives us a capacity for all the services to which we are called out, and furnishes us with all our credentials in it, [*is*] the blessed God himself: *Who hath also sealed us^e to mark and secure us^f for us peculiar property, and in farther confirmation of his regard for us, given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts*, those sacred communications both of gifts and graces which lead us into enjoyments that we look upon as the anticipation of heaven, and not only as a pledge, but a foretaste of it. This is the happy state into which we are now brought, for which I desire ever to glorify and adore the Divine goodness, and to behave as one that is favoured

amen, unto the glory of God by us.

21 Now he which establisheth us (with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God:

22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

^d *Establisheth us.*] To explain this of furnishing St. Paul with such arguments as enabled him more and more to confirm the Corinthians in the Christian faith, and himself in the character of a faithful minister, is, I think, giving but a small part of the genuine and sublime sense of this excellent passage.

^e *Hath anointed us—sealed us.*] Mons. Saurin thinks that the difference between the *unction*, the *seal*, and the *earnest* of the Spirit, is this: that the *unction* chiefly refers to those extraordinary endowments by which the apostles were set apart to their work, as priests and kings were consecrated to theirs, by being anointed; the *seal*, to the sacraments, which marked them out as the

peculiar property of God; and the *earnest* he explains of those joys of the Holy Ghost which were the anticipation of celestial happiness. See Saur. Ser. Vol. XI. p. 83—85.

^f *Mark and secure us.*] That *sealing* refers to both these, is well shown by Dr. Whitby's note on this text. Some understand this verse as insinuating how unreasonable it would be to suspect him of levity who was sealed by such extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. Compare John vi. 27. But that argument would be something precarious; and as he speaks of the *earnest of the Spirit* in the hearts of believers, I thought the interpretation here given much preferable.

with such invaluable blessings and with such glorious prospects as these. SECT. II.

23 Moreover, I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

But with respect to that change in my purpose of coming to you, which some would represent as an instance of a contrary conduct, I call God for a record on my soul, and declare to you, even as I hope he will have mercy upon it, that it was not because I slighted my friends or feared mine enemies, but out of a real tenderness, and with a desire to spare you that uneasiness which I thought I must in that case have been obliged to give you, that I came not as yet to Corinth, as I had once intended, and given you some reason to expect.

2 Cor. i. 23.

24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

I mention this, not because we pretend to have any absolute dominion over your faith, so as of my own authority to dictate what you should believe or do; nor would we exert the power with which Christ has endowed us to any tyrannical or overbearing purposes; but we, even I and all the faithful ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ, are joint helpers of your joy: we labour to use all the furniture which God hath given us to the advancement of your real comfort and happiness, which can only be secured by reducing you to your duty: but this very care will oblige us sometimes to take disagreeable steps with regard to those that act in such a manner as might tend to subvert the faith of their brethren; for by faith ye have stood hitherto: I readily acknowledge ye have in the general adhered to it; and it is by retaining the same principles pure and uncorrupted, with a realizing sense of them on our hearts, that we may still continue to stand in the midst of all the opposition we necessarily meet with from men insensible of every bond of duty and gratitude.

IMPROVEMENT.

ALL the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ: let us depend upon it that they will be performed; and make it

[Have mercy on it.] Nothing but would have justified the solemnity of the great importance of St. Paul's vindicating his character to such a church, such an oath.

SECT. our great care, that we may be able to say that we are interested through him in the blessings to which they relate. Let there be a proportionable steadiness and consistence in our obedience, and let not our engagements to God be yea and nay, since his to us are so invariably faithful.

Ver. 19. Are we established in Christ? Are we sealed with the earnest 21 of the Spirit in our hearts? Let us acknowledge that it is God 22 who hath imparted it to us; and let Christians of the greatest steadiness and experience be proportionably humble, rather than by any means elated on account of their superiority to others.

We see the light in which ministers should always consider themselves, and in which they are to be considered by others; not as having dominion over the faith of their people, having a right to dictate by their own authority what they should believe, or, on the same principles, what they should do; but as 24 helpers of their joy, in consequence of being helpers of their piety and obedience. In this view, how amiable does the ministerial office appear! What a friendly aspect it wears upon the happiness of mankind! And how little true benevolence do they manifest who would expose it to ridicule and contempt!

Let those who bear that office be careful that they do not give it the most dangerous wound, and abet the evil works of those who despise and deride it; which they will most effectually do, if they appear to form their purposes according to the flesh. Let them with a single eye direct all their administrations to the glory of God and the edification of the church; 13 that they may be able to appeal to their hearers, as those that must acknowledge and bear their testimony to their uprightness. In that case they will be able to look on them as those 14 in whom they hope to rejoice in the day of the Lord. And if, while they pursue these ends, they are censured as actuated by any mean and less worthy principle, let them not be much surprised or discouraged: they share in exercises from which the blessed apostle St. Paul was not exempted; as indeed there is no integrity or caution which can guard any man from the effects of that malice against Christ and his gospel, with which some hearts overflow when they feel themselves condemned by it.

SECT. III.

The apostle expresses his great affection to the Corinthians, as manifested both in his sympathy with the offending member of their church, who having been under censure, was now penitent; (in which view he advises his readmission;) and also in his solicitude for tidings concerning them from Titus, whom not finding at Troas, he went to meet in Macedonia. 2 Cor. ii. 1—13.

2 COR. II. 1.

BUT I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you with heaviness.

2 CORINTHIANS II. 1.

I NOW plainly and faithfully tell you the true reason of that delay of my journey which has so much surprised most of you, and at which some appear to be scandalized. It was not that I forgot you, or failed in any friendly regards to you; but I determined this with myself, on hearing how things stood among you, that I would not, if it could by any means be prevented, come to you again in grief,^a in circumstances which must have grieved both myself and you; but that I would wait for those fruits which I had reason to hope from my endeavours in my former epistle, to regulate what had been amiss. For if I should be obliged to grieve you, who² should then rejoice me, unless it be he who is now grieved by me?^b My affection to you as a church is indeed so great, that I could enjoy very little comfort myself if you were in sorrow, especially in consequence of any act of mine, however necessary it were: And therefore I have written³ thus to you, in order to the farther promoting of that reformation which is necessary to my own comfort, as well as to your honour and peace; that I may not, when I come again, have grief on account of those for whom I ought to rejoice, having this confident persuasion concerning

SECT.
III.

2 Cor.
ii. 1.

² For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?

³ And I wrote this same unto you, lest when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you

^a *I would not come to you in grief.*] It may be objected, why then did he speak of coming in his former epistle, (1 Cor. xvi. 5—7,) when the incestuous persons being yet impenitent, and their obedience to his directions, with relation to that case, being as yet unapproved, the cause of sorrow, and the necessity of grieving them, seemed yet greater than now? But it is very likely that after he had writ that epistle, and perhaps while these things were in suspense, he had received news of other disorders among them; and indeed it is evident that he seems apprehensive, even on supposition that the incestuous persons were happily restored,

he might yet be under a necessity of exercising an unwilling severity among them. Chap. xii. 20, 21; and chap. xiii. 1—6, 10.

^b *Unless it be he who is grieved by me.*] It cannot reasonably be objected, that the sound part of the church would rejoice him; for even they would be grieved by the necessity of such severities; they would sympathize with the afflicted and corrected persons; and on the other hand, the recovery of offenders would give him more sensible joy than any thing else; which considerations taken together will abundantly justify this expression.

SECT. *you all* in general, *that my joy is [the joy] of you* all, *that my joy is*
 III. *all,*^c and that you do in the main bear the same *the joy of you all.*

2 Cor.
 ii. 4.

affection towards me as I feel in my heart towards you. *For some time ago, with much affliction and overbearing anguish*^d *of heart, I wrote an epistle to you,*^e which was attended with many tears, and I designed by it, *not, as you may be sure, that ye might be grieved, but that ye might know,* by one of the most genuine tokens which it was possible for me to give, *that overflowing love which I bear to you,* of the degree and tenderness of which I was never myself so sensible as I have been since this sad occasion of discovering it happened. *And if any one of you hath been so unhappy as to have occasioned grief, he hath only grieved me in part;* I am but one of a much greater number who have felt this affectionate concern. And this I say, *that I may not overburden you all,* nor fix any unjust charge upon the whole body of the Corinthian church, as if it had taken part with such an offender in afflicting me: far from that, I rather believe it has sympathized with me in my grief. And *sufficient to such an one,*^f *who hath here been the aggressor, [is] this rebuke and censure, [that he hath] already [suffered] by many,* and indeed by the whole body of your society; which has shown so wise and pious a readiness to pursue the directions I gave for animadverting upon him, and bringing him to repentance. *So that, on the whole, I am well satisfied in what the church has done; and*

4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart, I wrote unto you with many tears; not that you should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

5 But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all.

6 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many.

7 So that contra-

^c *My joy is the joy of you all.*] Mr. Locke argues from hence, that a distinction is to be made between the Corinthians, to whom this epistle was written, and the false teachers, who were Jews, and who crept in among them, and whom he does not comprehend in the number of those concerning whom he speaks with such tenderness and hope. And thus he would reconcile this passage, and chap. vii. 13—15, with chap. xi. 13—15; chap. x. 6—11. Compare chap. xi. 22, where it is intimated some of them were Hebrews. But as we are sure some of the Corinthians had been seduced and alienated from St. Paul by them, I think it most reasonable to understand this as spoken of what he might conclude to be their general character; and it was both generous and prudent in the apostle to set it in this point of view.

^d *Overbearing anguish.*] This seems the import of *συνοχην*, which nearly resembles *συνηχην*, (compare chap. v. 14,) which I render *bears away*.

^e *Wrote an epistle, &c.*] Probably he here refers to such passages as those in the first epistle, which speak of scandalous persons among them, and direct to the methods to be taken to reduce them to order.

^f *To such an one.*] Mr. Locke very well observes the great tenderness which the apostle uses to this offender; he never once mentions his name, nor does he here so much as mention his crime; but speaks of him in the most indefinite manner that was consistent with giving such directions in his case as love required.

riwise, ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

8 Wherefore I beseech you, that ye would confirm your love towards him.

9 For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgive any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ:

11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

12 Furthermore,

instead of urging you to pursue farther severities against him, who now, by the blessing of God on the discipline you have used, is become a penitent: I, on the contrary, declare it to you as my judgment, that you should rather forgive and comfort [him,] lest such a one, if kept under continual rebuke, should be swallowed up with an excess of sorrow, and rendered incapable of those duties of the Christian life, to the performance of which I would cheerfully hope that he is now inclined. Therefore I beseech you to confirm [the assurances] and demonstrations [of your] love to him in the most tender and endearing manner that you can; which may convince him that your seeming severity proceeded from cordial affection. For indeed it was partly to this purpose that I have written, that I might have experience of you, whether ye would be obedient in all things to my apostolical instructions and decisions; and it gives me unspeakable pleasure to find that ye have been so. And truly I have such confidence in you as a society, that I may say, not only in this instance, but in any other that may happen, that to whom you forgive any thing which hath been esteemed an offence, so as to be willing to restore the offender to your communion, I also shall be ready to [forgive it;] and if I forgive any thing, to whomsoever it may be, [it is] not out of regard to the offender alone, but in a great measure for your sakes, that as in the person of Christ, and by the high authority with which he hath been pleased to invest me, I join in taking off the censure. For I know the prosperity of the church in general is concerned in conducting these affairs aright, and am solicitous, lest if they be carried to any excess of rigour, Satan should get an advantage over us, and turn that severity into an occasion of mischief to the offender, to his brethren, and to others. For we are not ignorant of his devices, and of the great variety of stratagems which he is continually making use of to injure us, and to turn even discipline itself to the reproach of the church, and the destruction of souls. These are the sentiments which prevail in my heart towards you; and my conduct, since the date of my last epistle, hath

SECT.
III.
2 Cor.
ii. 7.

SECT. been a genuine demonstration of this my affectionate concern. *For, when I came unto Troas*^g in the service of the gospel of Christ, and found things there so situated, that *there was a large door opened to me in the Lord*, many circumstances seeming to invite my stay, and to give

when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,

2 Cor.
ii. 12.

13 a prospect of success in my ministry: Yet *I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find my brother Titus* there, whom I had sent to inquire into your affairs, and from whom I expected tidings of you. I would not therefore make any abode at Troas, though so many considerations concurred to invite me to it; *but taking my leave of them, I went out of Asia into Macedonia*, where I thought he might be, and where I had the happiness quickly to meet him, and to receive that news of you which has given me so much pleasure, and in consequence of which I have found occasion to write to you in a more comfortable manner, as I here do. And I bless God that the purposes of my Christian ministry have not upon the whole been frustrated by this journey, but that the Divine blessing hath attended my labours here as well as in the places which I left, that I might come hither.

13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET ministers learn from hence, after the example of this wise and benevolent apostle, to be very tender of the ease and comfort of those committed to their care; doing nothing to grieve or distress them, unless, as in the case before us, love requires it in order to their safety and happiness. Let them learn this candid and endearing method of putting the best interpretation upon every thing, and of believing, where there is any reason to hope it, that their joy is the joy of their people also. When professing Christians offend, and cannot be reclaimed by gentler methods, let them, not out of resentment, but affection, have recourse to the discipline which Christ hath instituted in his church;

Ver.
1, 2

^g *Come unto Troas.*] Mr. Owen (of Ordin. Part I. p. 124.) thinks this happened in St. Paul's journey from Corinth to Macedonia; and mentions it as a fact omitted by St. Luke, to be collected from the epistles. Many such facts there undoubtedly are, and this seems one of them, though not just in that circumstance. It seems to have happened in that passage from Asia to Macedonia of

which so very short an account is given, Acts xx. 1, 2. He afterwards ordered some Christian friends, who were attending him to Asia after he had spent three months in Macedonia, to wait for him at Troas, (ib. verses 4, 5,) probably for this reason among others, that they might have an opportunity of preaching the gospel to a people who seemed so ready to receive it.

and when that discipline hath answered its end, and the offender is recovered to a sense of his evil; let them with the greatest pleasure concur in re-admitting him to the communion of the church from which he has been excluded, with a tender concern lest he should be swallowed up of overmuch sorrow; always considering how watchful the enemy of souls is to get an advantage over us; and remembering that it will be the peculiar wisdom of ministers to acquaint themselves with these artful and malicious devices of Satan, by which he is incessantly endeavouring to distress and ruin the church, and to lay snares for its members in their hopes and their fears, their joys and their sorrows, so as to take occasion from every incident and from every interest to weaken and to wound them.

The great source of a right conduct on all these occasions is unfeigned love: that let us labour to establish in our hearts towards each other; praying that God by his Spirit would establish it. And though the consequence of this would be that our spirits, like the apostle's, will be accessible to many sorrows which we should not otherwise feel; and though it is possible that we, like St. Paul in the instance before us, may sometimes be interrupted in active services of life which we might otherwise have been more ready to pursue; yet we may hope that while we are faithfully influenced by love, under the direction of that Christian prudence which ought ever to attend it, views of usefulness may be opened where we least expect them, may be opened one way while they are obstructed another; yea, upon the whole, what has for a while interrupted our success, may in its remoter consequences greatly advance it.

SECT. IV.

The apostle expresses in the most affectionate terms his thankfulness to God for having intrusted him with the ministry of the gospel, and for the success attending his services therein; and declares his joyful confidence in all events of the Divine acceptance; and speaks of the Corinthians as his credentials written by the finger of God. 2 Cor. ii. 14, to the end. Chap. iii. 1—6.

2 Cor. ii. 14.

2 CORINTHIANS II. 14.

NOW thanks be **I** HAVE informed you that I left a fair opportunity of preaching the gospel at Troas, in consequence of the great desire I had to hear from you; for which purpose I went into Macedonia. But I desire thankfully to own the Divine goodness in attending my ministry with very comfortable success there. And in-

SECT.
IV.

2 Cor.
ii. 14.

SECT. deed I have great reason to break out into a
IV. transport of praise in the reflection: Yes, my

brethren, thanks, everlasting thanks, [be ren-
2 Cor. dered] by you and me to the God of all power
ii. 14. and grace, who always causeth us to triumph in
Christ,^a carrying us on from one spiritual vic-
tory to another, and manifesteth by us in every
place the fragrant and powerful odour of his

15 saving knowledge. Well may I rejoice upon
this account: for we the apostles, and other mi-
nisters of his gospel, are to God a sweet and ac-
ceptable odour of Christ: he is as it were pleas-
ed and delighted with the incense of his name
and gospel as diffused by us, both with respect
to them who believe and are saved, and to them
who in consequence of their unbelief perish in

16 their sins. To the latter indeed [we are] an
odour of death; the fragrancy, so rich in itself,
instead of reviving, destroys them, and is effi-
cacious to bring on death in its most dreadful
forms. But to the other [we are] an odour of
life; the gospel revives their souls, and is effec-
tual to their eternal life and salvation. And
when we consider all these awful consequen-
ces, which one way or other attend our minis-
try, we may truly say, Who [is] sufficient for
these things? Who is worthy to bear such
an important charge? Who should undertake

17 it without trembling? Nevertheless, though
we must acknowledge ourselves unworthy of
such a charge, God is pleased to succeed us in
the execution of it, as he knows our sincerity
in his sight and presence. For we are not
as many who adulterate the word of God^b by

unto God, which al-
ways causeth us to
triumph in Christ,
and maketh mani-
fest the savour of his
knowledge by us in
every place.

15 For we are un-
to God a sweet sa-
vour of Christ in
them that are saved,
and in them that
perish.

16 To the one we
are the savour of
death unto death;
and to the other, the
savour of life unto
life. And who is suf-
ficient for these
things?

17 For we are not
as many which cor-
rupt the word of

^a Causeth us to triumph.] Witsius would render *ὑγιαίνοντι*, who triumphs over us, (compare Col. ii. 15.) and supposes it expresses the joy with which St. Paul reflected on that powerful and sovereign grace which had led him in triumph, who was once so insolent an enemy to the gospel. I rather think the apostle represents himself as triumphing through the Divine power. And as in triumphal processions, especially in the East, fragrant odours and incense were burned near the conquerors; so he seems beautifully to allude to that circumstance in what he says of the *οσμήν*, the odour of the gospel, in the following verses. And he

seems farther to allude to the different effects of strong perfumes to cheer some, and to throw others into violent disorders, according to the different dispositions they are in to receive them; and Ælian observes that some kind of animals are killed by them, Hist. Anim. iii. 7.

^b Adulterate the word.] *καπηλευόντες* is a very expressive phrase, and alludes to the practice of those who deal in liquors, which they debase for their own greater gain; and it insinuates in strong terms the base temper and conduct of their false teachers. Bos has finely illustrated the force of this expression in his learned and elegant note on this text. Exer. p. 154, 155.

God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

their own base mixtures, and retail it, when formed according to the corrupt taste of their hearers; *but as of unmingled sincerity, but as by the express command of God, in the presence of God we speak in the name of Christ*; delivering every part of our message as those that know how awful our account is, and how impossible it is to conceal so much as a single thought from that all-penetrating Being, to whom we are shortly to give it up.

SECT.
IV.

2 Cor.
ii. 17.

2 Cor. iii. 1. Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?

2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

And when I say this, *do we again*, as some presume to insinuate, *begin to recommend ourselves*, and one another, [*to you?*] Or do we need, as I perceive some [*do,*] *recommendatory letters to you from other churches, or recommendatory [letters] from you to others?* Truly I

2 Cor.
iii. 1.

may well say, *you are yourselves our epistle*, the best recommendation from God himself, his testimonial, as it were, *written upon your hearts^c* in the glorious change by our means produced there; and the effects of it are so apparent in your lives, that I may say ye are *known and read by all men*, who know what you once were, and you now are; and they who consider these things must acknowledge, that such success granted by the co-operation of Divine grace, is as evident a proof of God's gracious presence with us as can well be imagined. [*Ye,*] whose characters were some of them once so enormous, (1 Cor. vi. 11.) but [*are*] now so amiable and excellent, are indeed *manifest* and apparent, *as the epistle of Christ which is ministered by us*; and by you Christ doth, as it were, declare that he hath been faithfully preached among you by us; an epistle *written not*, as epistles generally are, *with ink*, but by traces drawn *by the Spirit of the one living and true God*, moving on your hearts, and producing that variety of graces which render many of you so conspicuous and lovely. And the inscription is *not* (as that

3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in

^c Upon your hearts.] Some copies read *our hearts*, that is, *always remembered and thought of*. But I apprehend the apostle means, that the change produced, not only in their external conduct, but in their inward temper, was so great, that all who could judge of it by intimate

knowledge, (and it is certain that some judgment may be formed,) must own it a great attestation of his ministry. The great enormities in which they were once plunged, (see 1 Cor. vi. 11, &c.) would much illustrate this argument.

SECT. boasted monument which did so great an honour to the mission and authority of Moses,) tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.

IV. written in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart; to which no hand, but that by which the heart was made, could find access, in such a manner as to inscribe these sacred

4 characters there. *Such confidence have we towards God by Jesus Christ, that our ministry shall be effectual in other places, and that the world shall by your means be persuaded of our apostleship.*

4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

5 We say this, *not as insinuating that we are sufficient of ourselves to reckon upon any thing as from ourselves;*^d we would not insinuate this, or encourage any others to do it; for we are upon all occasions ready most thankfully to acknowledge that all our sufficiency [is] from God; whatever furniture of any kind we have for our work, we humbly ascribe it to him, and from him arise all our expectations of success

5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God:

6 with this furniture, whatever it be: From that great and adorable Author of all good *who also hath made us his apostles, and others whom he hath sent into the work, able ministers of the new covenant, sufficiently qualified to discharge that important trust of proposing this gracious covenant of God, established in Christ, to our fellow-creatures. For we are indeed ministers, not of the letter, but of the Spirit;*^e for we are enabled to enter into the sense and spirit of the law, and other sacred writings; whereas that Divine volume is to the Jews but as a heap of letters and characters, which they know not how to read or understand, and yet pride themselves so much in them, that in that sense it may be said they receive mischief rather than benefit from their own oracles. Thus the letter

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter

^d To reckon upon any thing as of ourselves.] This seems the most exact rendering of λογισσθαι τι ως εξ εαυτων. Dr. Whitby renders it to reason, as if the apostle had said, We are unable by any reasoning of our own to bring men to conversion: which gives a fine and just sense, but I think only a part of what the apostle intended. Compare Acts xix. 27; Rom. iv. 3, 6, 11; chap. viii. 13, 36; 1 Cor. iv. 1; in all which the

word λογίζομαι has the signification we here assign it, and signifies to reckon or account.

^e Not of the letter, but of the Spirit.] To understand this of an allegorical rather than literal explication of the Old Testament, is very arbitrary and unwarrantable; and I wish no Christian commentators had given encouragement to the Deists to abuse this text in the manner it is well known they have done.

killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

killeth: the unbelieving Jews are undone by their obstinate adherence to it, and more prejudiced against the gospel than those that never heard of any Divine revelation at all. *But* when taught by the Spirit of God speaking in us, they enter into the spiritual sense and design of the law, then it *giveth life*; it establisheth our faith, quickens our obedience, and becomes a source of happiness in this world and in the next.

SECT.
IV.

2 Cor.
iii. 6.

IMPROVEMENT.

MAY the infinite importance of the gospel-message be deeply impressed on all who preach and all who hear it. Life, or death, is in question; eternal life, or everlasting death; and while it is from day to day reviving its thousands, is it not to be feared that in some places it is, by the righteous judgment of God on hard and impenitent hearts, aggravating the guilt and misery of its ten thousands? How awful is the work of dispensing this gospel! Who can pretend to be sufficient for such things as these? Who, that considers the nature and importance of the ministerial work, can undertake or pursue it but with fear and trembling?

Chap.
ii.
15, 16

Yet, insufficient as they ought humbly to acknowledge themselves to be to reckon upon any thing as from themselves, there is a sufficiency in God imparted to faithful ministers; in consequence of which they are often made to triumph in Christ, and borne on, in a holy superiority to all the difficulties of their work, and see their labour not to be in vain in the Lord. Well may that support them under the discouragements which, in other instances, they feel, when the fruit of their labours does not immediately appear; yea, when the present state of many under their care is directly contrary to what they could desire; for their work is still with the Lord, and they are a sweet savour to God in them that perish, as well as in them that are saved. Let them therefore gird up the loins of their mind, and exert themselves with the utmost vigour, rejoicing in this, that God will on the whole be glorified, and they shall on the whole be accepted, and through his abundant grace be amply rewarded. Yea, God will consider, in that day of final recompense, the anguish which they have felt for the souls they have seen perishing under their ministrations, as well as the faithful pains they have bestowed to reclaim them.

Chap.
iii. 5.
Chap.
ii. 14.

But as they desire to secure this acceptance, yea, to secure their own salvation, let them never allow themselves, by any foreign mixtures, to adulterate the word of God; but let them

SECT. speak it in its uncorrupted sincerity, as in the sight and presence of God, and as those who know it is not their business to
 IV. devise a message out of their own hearts, but to deliver what they have received of the Lord. So may they hope there shall not
 Chap. be wanting those who, according to the views which the apostle
 iii. 2. gives us of these Corinthians, shall appear as epistles written by the hand of Christ himself, in attestation of their commission from him.

That ministers may more cheerfully hope for and expect such an honour, let us all pray, that the Spirit of God may lead them into the true sense and meaning of scripture; that they may not unprofitably amuse themselves and their hearers with vain and
 6 cold criticisms on the letter of it, so as to neglect and forget what is most spiritual in its design and meaning; but that they may, under Divine illumination, attain to the mind of the Spirit, and be enabled to make greater proficiency in unfolding and illustrating the important mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and may be to multitudes a savour of life unto life.

Chap. ii. 16.

SECT. V.

The Apostle, farther to recommend the ministry of which he had been speaking, falls into a very pertinent and useful digression concerning the comparative obscurity of the Mosaic law, and the superior glory and permanence of the gospel. 2 Cor. iii. 7, to the end.

2 CORINTHIANS III. 7.

SECT. I HAVE just been observing, that the letter of
 V. the law, in that sense in which it is maintained by the Jews, killeth in itself; it binds
 2 Cor. down transgressors under a sentence of death,
 iii. 7. and, by the perverseness of their interpretation, is the occasion of ruin; while the Spirit quickeneth. And let me now direct your thoughts to the argument arising from hence to prove the greatly superior excellence of the gospel: for if the Mosaic law, which was indeed the ministration of death, which was [contained] in visible letters, [and] the most excellent part of which was engraven in the two tables of stone, hewn indeed and prepared by God himself, which Moses brought down from Mount Sinai in his hands, was attended with a signal and undeniable glory, so that the children of Israel could not look directly upon the face of Moses, because of the glory of his countenance, which was so soon

2 COR. III. 7.
 BUT if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away :

8 How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?

to be abolished in death: How much more shall that, which may with so much propriety be called *the ministration of the Spirit, be glorious!* Since the work of the Spirit of God on the heart of a rational being, is so much more important than any dead characters which could be engraven on insensible stones.

SECT.

V.

2 Cor.
iii. 8.

9 For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

This may be farther apparent when we consider what I hinted before, concerning the impossibility of obtaining life and salvation by the Mosaic law. For if that which was, in its effects, only *the ministration of condemnation*, pronouncing a sentence of death, in many cases without mercy, and which at last certainly ended in leaving persons under condemnation, as it was incapable of taking away the moral guilt of any one offence, [was attended with] so bright a glory;^a how much more shall the gospel, which may well be called *the ministration of righteousness, exceed in glory!* as it puts us into so certain a way to obtain justification and life everlasting.

10 For even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

For even that which was made glorious at its first dispensation, that is, the law of Moses, hath no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth it by unutterable degrees; so that as the sun swalloweth up the light of the moon and the stars, in like manner is the lustre of former dispensations swallowed up in that of the gospel. For if that which was to be so soon abolished, was nevertheless attended, as we have seen, with some considerable degrees of glory, to illustrate its Divine original and authority, how much more glorious [must] that [be] which remaineth immutable through the remotest ages!^b

11 For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

^a *Attended with glory.*] Dr. Whitby has taken a great deal of pains to prove that there is an intended opposition between the glory, that is, the visible lustre on the countenance of Moses, (compare Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30, where the Seventy use the word *δόξα*;) with the glory which descended on the apostles; (Acts ii. 3, 4.) and considers each as an emblem of the dispensation to be introduced, but with incomparable advantage, on the side of the gospel. But laboured as this inter-

pretation is, I cannot acquiesce in what is singular in it; and it had been obvious to have objected to verse 11, that the cloven tongues of fire left no such lasting lustre on the face of the apostles as on that of Moses.

^b *If that which was to be, &c.*] Mr. Hallet would render it, "if that which was done away, was done away by glory, how much more doth that which remaineth, remain in glory!" But I think this must appear harsh to

SECT.

v.

2^d Cor.

iii. 12.

This is the glorious ministry in which we are engaged; and it brings along with it the sublimest sentiments and the noblest views.

12 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech.

Having therefore this hope and confidence, it is no wonder that we use great liberty of address

13 when we are speaking to you; *And [are] not herein concealed, as Moses, [who] put a veil upon his face, (compare Exod. xxxiv. 33,^c) wherein he was a kind of type and figure of his own dispensation; so that he might seem thereby to intimate that the children of Israel could not directly look to the end of that law which he brought, and which was, as I observed before,*

13 And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished.

14 *to be abolished:^d But, on the contrary, their understandings are evidently blinded; for until this day the same veil continues upon the law, or rather upon their own hearts, and is still unre-moved during the reading of the Old Testament, which contains such distinct prophecies of Christ, and such lively descriptions of him, that one would imagine it impossible that he should not be immediately acknowledged and adored by all that profess to believe its Divine authority: which [veil] is taken away in those that receive Christ, who have in him the true substance of those shadows, and the great end of*

14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away, in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ.

15 *its most important prophecies. But as to the unbelieving Jews, as I said before, the veil which they wear in their synagogues too aptly represents that which is upon their heart when Moses is read, even to this day, in their hearing; in consequence of which they can no more see the mind of Moses than their fathers could see*

15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.

16 *his face. But it shall not always be so; the house of Israel is entitled to a variety of most excellent promises, relating to the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom; and as when Moses went in to the Lord he laid aside his veil, so when it, that is, the people of Israel, shall turn unto the*

16 Nevertheless, when it shall turn to

every one that examines the original; *δια δόξης* is literally *by glory*, and so may signify *introduced by it, or attended with it, or confirmed by it*; and in either of these senses may well be applied to the shining of the face of Moses.

^c *And are not, &c.]* All that follows from hence to the beginning of the 18th verse may be included in a parenthesis.

^d *Which was to be abolished.]* Such an oblique manner of speaking on this subject, makes the argument from these words peculiarly striking. It is taken for granted, as a thing certainly known and quite indisputable, that the Mosaic dispensation was to be abolished.

the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.

17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Lord, when the blessed period appointed for their general conversion shall come, *the veil shall be taken away*, and the genuine sense of the sacred oracles shall break in upon their minds with an irresistible light. Now the Lord Jesus Christ is that Spirit of the law of which I spake before, to whom the letter of it was intended to lead the Jews; and it is the office of the Spirit of God, as the great Agent in his kingdom, to direct the minds of men to it. And let him be universally sought in this view; for where the Spirit of the Lord [is] there [is] liberty: a more liberal and filial disposition, to which, under the influence and operation of the Spirit, the gospel brings those who were subject to bondage, under the imperfect dispensation of Moses. And in consequence of the liberty enjoyed by virtue of the gracious economy, we all, who have been so happy as suitably to welcome it, with unveiled face attentively beholding as by a glass^e or mirror, the glory of the Lord^f reflected from his word, are transformed into something of the same resplendent image of the blessed Redeemer, whose shining face we there see; and the more stedfastly we behold this illustrious and amiable form, the more we do partake of it, proceeding gradually from glory to glory. And all this is as proceeding from the Lord the Spirit;^g for as the Lord Jesus Christ is the spirit of the law, so the Divine Spirit, under his direction and influences, is the cause of this noble and divine effect.

SECT.
v.
2 Cor.
iii. 16.

^e Beholding as by a glass.] Some would render καὶ ὡς ἐν ὀφθαλμῷ, reflecting as from a glass. But Elsner and Bos have abundantly proved, what indeed is evident to all versed in the language, that it has the signification here assigned; and indeed the other interpretation would obscure and perplex the sense.

^f Beholding—the glory of the Lord.] Here is one of the most beautiful contrasts that can be imagined. Moses saw the Shechinah, and it rendered his face resplendent, so that he covered it with a veil, the Jews not being able to bear the reflected light: we behold Christ as in the glass of his word, and (as the reflection of a very luminous object from a

mirror gilds the face on which the reverberated rays fall,) our faces shine too; and we veil them not, but diffuse the lustre, which, as we discover more and more of his glories in the gospel, is continually increasing.

^g By the Lord the Spirit.] As the order of the Greek words is unusual, not πνεῦμα τοῦ κυρίου, but κυρίου πνεῦμα, Dr. Whitby would render it by the Lord of the Spirit, that is, by Christ, in whom the Spirit dwells, and by whom it is communicated according to his sovereign will. But the paraphrase unites two senses, each I think more natural, though which of the two was chiefly intended, I cannot absolutely determine.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. STILL doth this glorious glass of the gospel stand full in our
 v. view, from which the lustre of the Redeemer's countenance is
 reflected. Let us daily behold his image there, and contem-
 Ver. 18. plate it with an attentive eye, as those who are solicitous that
 we may wear some of those rays; yea, that we may wear them
 with still increasing lustre; that we may be transformed from
 glory to glory, and reflecting those rays, shine as lights in the
 world.

Let us endeavour to raise our minds to this laudable temper,
 by frequently reflecting on the excellence of the Christian dispen-
 7, 8 sation, as a dispensation of the Spirit and of life; whereas the
 law was the ministration of death; and while, from the glory at-
 tending the law, we infer, with the apostle, the supereminent
 glory of the gospel, let us learn also the superior obligation it
 brings us under to regard and obey it, and the proportionably
 11 greater danger of despising it. The law of Moses was soon to be
 abolished; the gospel still remains, and shall remain to the end
 of time. Let us pray for its prosperity, and do our utmost to pro-
 mote it. And let us earnestly plead with God, that whereas
 14 there is now a veil upon the face of the Jews even unto this day,
 when the sacred records are read among them, they may turn un-
 16 to the Lord, and find the veil taken away: that so by the con-
 version of Israel as a nation, there may be a glorious accession of
 evidence to Christianity; and that the Jews themselves may be
 happy in the blessing of him whom their fathers crucified, and
 whom they continue contemptuously to reject.

Let the ministers of the gospel, while defending so divine a
 cause, and enforcing so important a message, use all becoming
 12 plainness of speech; and may all Christians know more of that
 17 liberty which the Spirit of the Lord gives, that God may in all
 things be glorified, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

SECT. VI.

The apostle declares his courage, and disclaims all sinister views and all distrust of success, in pursuing the glorious ministry he had described: being persuaded that such a gospel could not be rejected, but in consequence of the most fatal prejudices. 2 Cor. iv. 1—6.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 1.

SUCH are the distinguished glories of the gos-
 pel dispensation, and its effects on the hearts
 of those who sincerely embrace it. And there-

2 COR. IV. 1.

THEREFORE see-

ing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom the god of this world

fore having been intrusted with such a ministration, as we have obtained mercy [of God] to be thus honoured, we faint not under any of those difficulties we are called out to encounter, nor in any degree desist from our glorious enterprise.^a But we have renounced and set at defiance the hidden things of shame;^b in which the priests of Paganism deal so much, in order to impose on the people over whom they preside, practising in their mysteries so many impure and so many foolish rites. We need not any of their artifices, not walking in craftiness, as some would insinuate that we do, nor deceitfully corrupting and disguising the word of God; but, by the manifestation of the genuine and unsophisticated truth, recommending ourselves to every man's conscience, we steadily and constantly act as in the all-penetrating sight of God; and therefore are willing that all the world should know what the arts and mysteries of our ministry are.

But if our gospel, after such open and generous conduct on our side, be still under a veil too,^c as the law is with respect to so many, it is veiled to those that are perishing; they must be very bad men, and in a very dangerous state, who hearing it preached as it is by us, cannot enter into the main design and spirit of it, and are not inwardly engaged to reverence it. Among whom undoubtedly, that is, in the number of such unhappy wretches, [are] all [they] whose unbelieving minds Satan, who herein acts as the god of this world,^d whose subjects the children

SECT.
VI.
1 Cor.
iv. 1.

^a Desist from our glorious enterprise.] *Εκκαθεν* naturally expresses the drawing back from some strenuous undertaking, in what we often call a dastardly manner, on account of some difficulties attending it.

^b Renounced the hidden things of shame.] Dr. Whitby understands this of lewd practices; but the opposition between this clause and the following seems much more to favour the paraphrase, though, to be sure, the phrase may extend to all dishonest artifices of false teachers. The word *ἀπειπαμεθα*, which we render renounce, does not imply they ever had any thing to do with these things; but

the words "set them at defiance," seem still more literally to express the original.

^c If our gospel be under a veil too.] *Εἰ δὲ καὶ εἰ κεκαλυμμενον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν*, is most literally rendered thus: and it has so evident a reference to what was said above of the veil on the faces of the Jews, that it seems by all means expedient to translate it thus, rather than hid.—This text is justly urged by Dr. Scott (*Christian Life*, Vol. V. 320.) as a proof of the perspicuity of the apostle's writings in all matters of importance to our salvation.

^d The god of this world.] That several

SECT. of this world are, *hath blinded* by its dazzling
 VI. vanities and allurements, *lest the lustre of the*
 glorious gospel of Christ, *who is the image of the*
 2 Cor. invisible God in all his perfections and glories,
 iv. 9. *should beam forth upon them, and should pain*
 or rather awaken those weak minds, darkened
 by so many gross and unhappy prejudices, and
 5 *slumbering to their everlasting destruction. But*
 such as I have before described is our conduct,
 however perversely it may be mistaken or mis-
 represented. *For we preach not ourselves;*^e we
 aim not at exalting our own authority, at ex-
 tending our reputation, or securing to ourselves
 any secular advantage; *but renouncing all such*
views, and claims, and desires, we preach Christ
Jesus as the supreme Lord of his church; and
instead of setting ourselves up for your masters,
we declare ourselves to be your servants for the
sake of Jesus; and are willing out of regard
to you, and above all, out of duty to him, to
stoop to the humblest offices of love by which
 6 *we may be serviceable to you in your most im-*
 portant interests. And it is no wonder that
 we are thus disposed, considering the view of
 things which God hath given us by his grace;
for God, who, by his powerful word in the first
creation of this world, commanded the light in-
stantaneously to shine out of that darkness which
covered the whole face of the deep, (Gen. i. 5.)
hath also shined into our once prejudiced and
benighted hearts, and particularly into mine, by
the internal operation of his blessed Spirit, [to
impart] the lustre of the knowledge of God's
glory,^f discovered, as we before observed, *in the*

hath blinded the
minds of them which
believe not, lest the
light of the glorious
gospel of Christ, who
is the image of God,
should shine unto
them.

5 For we preach
 not ourselves, but
 Christ Jesus the Lord;
 and ourselves your
 servants for Jesus'
 sake.

6 For God, who
 commanded the light
 to shine out of dark-
 ness, hath shined in
 our hearts, to give
 the light of the know-
 ledge of the glory of
 God, in the face of
 Jesus Christ.

ancient Christian writers should interpret
 this of *God the Father*, is one of the most
 amazing things I have met with. See
 Dr. Whitby in loc. and Dr. Edwards, Ex-
 ercit. p. 291. I doubt not but Satan is
 intended; and could it be proved, as has
 been intimated, that this malignant spirit
 was so early called by the Jews *למדם*,
the god who blinds, I should think it a
 beautiful illustration.

^e *Preach not ourselves.*] Grotius ex-
 plains it thus, "we do not preach that
 "we are lords, but that Christ is so:"
 and this is certainly comprehended. But
 I think the phrase may well be taken in
 the larger extent, expressed in the para-

phrase. To *preach themselves*, may sig-
 nify their making *themselves*, in any
 view, *the end of their preaching*; as preach-
 ing Jesus, a phrase often used, may sig-
 nify preaching so as to direct men's
 eyes to him.

^f *To impart the lustre of the knowledge of*
God's glory.] *Γνοσινς της δοξης του Θεου*,
 may very well signify the *glorious know-*
ledge of God; but the following words de-
 termined me to the more literal transla-
 tion, as it is more proper to speak of the
 glory than of the knowledge of God, as
 in or upon the face of Christ. Some
 would render *προς φωτισμον*, according or
 in proportion to that *lustre*.

face of our Lord *Jesus Christ*,[§] from thence reflected upon us, and from us to you, for the important purposes of your sanctification and salvation.

SECT.
VI.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET all who are honoured with the ministry of the gospel Ver. 1. learn from the apostle courage and fidelity; remembering they are continually in the sight and presence of God. Let them therefore renounce with abhorrence that craft which so many who have called themselves Christian priests have studied; and labour to govern their whole conduct by such apparent principles of integrity and honour, that they may commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

This end will be much promoted if they learn to lay aside all sinister views of interest and ambition, of human applause, or a dominion over men's consciences; and putting on that humble character so amiably illustrated in the apostle Paul's writings, everywhere, with all loyal affection, preach Christ as the great Lord and Head of the church, and declare and approve themselves the willing servants of souls for his sake. So humbling themselves, they will be exalted in the eyes of God and man; and will reap those heartfelt pleasures now, and those honours, emoluments, and delights hereafter, which will infinitely more than indemnify them for all they may resign, and exceed not only the low apprehensions of the servants of mammon in Christ's livery, but their own most elevated conceptions.

Let every reader seriously examine himself as to the knowledge he has of this gospel, and the degree in which he has felt a sense of its glory and excellence upon his heart; solemnly considering that if the lustre and efficacy of the gospel be hidden from him, it is a sad sign that he is himself a lost creature, and is like to be lost to God and happiness for ever; he is the captive of Satan, blinded by him as the god of this world, and in the probable way to be led on to unseen but irretrievable destruction. Dreadful situation! which might indeed occasion absolute despair, were it not for the views which the gospel gives us of that God who in the beginning of the creation commanded the light to shine out of darkness: who can yet say, Let there be light, and there shall be light in the most benighted soul, and the lustre of the glorious knowledge of God in the person of Christ shall beam forth. Let this divine interposi-

§ *In the face of Jesus Christ.*] Some would render *προσωπον* person; but it so evidently signifies face in the context, (chap. iii. 13, 18.) that it seemed much better to render it face; though the glory here said

to be reflected from his face, is undoubtedly that which is manifested in his person in the union of Deity with humanity, and all the wonderful things he has done and suffered in consequence of it.

SECT. tion be earnestly implored; and oh that it may be imparted
VI. before the blinded captives be consigned to eternal ruin, to
blackness of darkness for ever!

SECT. VII.

The apostle freely acknowledges his own infirmities; but glories in the strength communicated to him from God, as an effectual support under the extremest trials: over which he triumphs in the language of the strongest faith. 2 Cor. iv. 7—15.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 7.

SECT.
VII.

2 Cor.
iv. 7.

I HAVE spoken to you of the excellence of the gospel, representing it as a most invaluable treasure; and indeed it is so rich a blessing, that the highest angel in heaven might think it an honour to be employed in dispensing it. *But* such is the conduct of Providence in this respect, that *we have this invaluable treasure in earthen vessels*: feeble creatures who dwell in mortal bodies, and are surrounded with numberless infirmities, are employed in dispensing it to us; that so the excellency of the power by which its great and important ends are answered, may appear to be of God, and not of us; who are so far from being able to add efficacy to our own labours, that it is wonderful how we are enabled even to sustain them. [We are] indeed in every respect^a greatly afflicted;^b but through the Divine care over us, we are not utterly overpressed^c with the weight and variety of our trials: we are often brought into dubious circumstances, but, blessed be God, we are not in despair: [We are] continually persecuted by men, but we are not forsaken of God; we are

2 Cor. iv. 7.

BUT we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair:

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast

^a In every respect we are afflicted, &c.] This section may seem a digression; but nothing could be more pertinent to the apostle's grand purpose. He aimed at recovering the affections of these Corinthians, which were much alienated from him; for this purpose he freely opens his heart towards them, and tenderly represents the many and grievous pressures and hardships to which love to souls, and to theirs among the rest, exposed him. This I

take to be the true key to this beautiful and pathetic passage.

^b We are afflicted.] I apprehend the apostle here to speak with some peculiar regard to his own case; yet not so as to exclude that of his brethren, which undoubtedly did very much resemble it. Compare 1 Cor. iv. 9.

^c Not utterly overpressed.] The word *γενομενοι* properly signifies crushed in a strait passage.

down, but not destroyed;

10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live, are always also delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I

thrown down by our enemies, yet we are not entirely destroyed by them; but animated from on high, we spring up again, and renew the combat with increasing vigour: We are *always bearing about with us in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ*; so that the cruelties which were exercised in putting him to death, seem to be acted over again upon us, by the rage of the enemy; yet all this is in effect, not that an immediate period should be put to our life and ministry as they desire, but *that the life also of Jesus*, now triumphant above all hostile power, *may be more evidently manifested in the preservation of this our feeble body*, which enemies so many and mighty are continually endeavouring to destroy. *For we who live*, those of us, 11 the apostles and ministers of Christ, who still survive, *are continually delivered over to death for the sake of the Lord Jesus*, and, as it were, every day led out to a new martyrdom in his cause; but so many new and unexpected deliverances arise, that it seems as if these dangers were permitted on purpose, *that, as I said before, the life also and power of the blessed Jesus*, our Divine Saviour, *may be manifested and demonstrated in supporting our mortal and feeble flesh in the midst of all these assaults*, and perpetuating our lives from year to year through so many successive dangers which await us wherever we come. *So that on the whole* I 12 may say, that *death worketh continually to glorify his name in us, but life in you*; while you are called to live for his honour, we may be said to serve our Redeemer by bearing for his sake repeated deaths.

But we endure it all with resolution and cheer, 13 fulness, *having the same spirit of faith* by which good men of old were animated in their most active labours and most painful sufferings; *according to what is written*, (Psal. cxvi. 10.) *I have believed, and therefore have I spoken;*^d

^d *I have believed, and therefore have I spoken.*] As for the quotation here, some think there is an allusion to the confidence which David expresses in the preceding words, of *walking before the Lord in the land of the living*; as if the apostle

had intended to say, we also shall in a nobler sense do it. Mr. Pierce supposes the *Spirit of faith* here spoken of, is the Spirit of Jesus, which enabled him through faith in God to preach that doctrine which he knew would provoke the rage

SECT.
VII.

2 Cor.
iv. 10.

SECT. we also cordially believe the certain truth of what spoken; we also be-
 VII. we teach, and therefore go on to speak our im- lieve, and therefore
 port- speak;

2 Cor.
 iv. 13.

importance, whatever may be the consequence, supported by this inward consciousness of our integrity, and animated by a powerful sense of duty towards God, and the hope of the most glorious rewards from his bountiful

14 grace. Those hopes rise to complete and everlasting happiness; which we continually pursue, as *knowing that* if we persevere in that service with which he hath honoured us, *he who raised up the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead by his almighty power, will also raise us up by Jesus, whom he will send at the last day, commissioned to accomplish this great work; and that then he will present [us] with you, before the presence of his glory with exceeding great joy, in each other and in him; and will introduce us to that heavenly kingdom, to the prospects of which he hath called us by that gospel which we have preached, and which you have*

15 believed. *For all these great things [are] prepared, not merely on our account, but for your sakes, that the overflowing grace being complete in all its diffusive extent and exalted degrees, might abound by the thanksgiving of many, even of countless multitudes who shall share for ever in it, to the glory of God, the great original and end of all.*

14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us adore the wisdom and goodness of God, in sending us the gospel-treasure in earthen vessels, in employing our fellow-mortals, rather than angels, under the character of his messengers to us; by which means we are taught more to depend on God for that efficacy of power that renders them successful; to acknowledge his hand in animating and preserving them, and are kept in such an exercise of faith, as is in this present world most honourable to God and most profitable to us. Let the

of a wicked world, so as to end in his death; and he undertakes to prove in his third Dissertation, that the cxvith psalm, in its original sense, is to be understood as spoken by the Psalmist in the person of the Messiah. But I see no necessity for urging this. The simpler sense of the passage, as it stands in the psalm, is,

“ Though I have been in very great affliction, and sometimes almost depressed, yet *faith* in God hath supported me, and put this song of praise into my mouth.” In this sense of the words nothing could be more natural than for St. Paul to adopt them.

mortality of ministers be suitably remembered by themselves SECT.
and others, and improved to the best purposes; and let us take VII.
care that we do not think the less honourably of the treasure,
on account of the weakness of those vessels in which the great
Proprietor has thought fit to lodge it.

Let it encourage them who are struggling with the difficulties of that arduous and important work, to think on those refreshments which the apostles experienced; in consequence of which, though afflicted, they were not depressed, and though persecuted, appeared not to be forsaken; but could boast that the support of their lives, amidst so many pressing dangers, Ver. 8, 2.
was a demonstration of the life of Christ. We may indeed all 11
say this, with respect to the support of the spiritual life, in the midst of so many difficulties. Having obtained help from him, we continue until this day; and it is because he lives that we live also. Confiding therefore in him, let us exert ourselves vigorously in this holy warfare to which we are called; and strenuously endeavour to maintain our ground against all the enemies who press hard to overbear and destroy us.

And that we may be thus animated, let us labour to engrave on our hearts a more lively and assured belief of the great and important things of which we speak and hear; and that not only 13
in the general, but in particular instances. Let us labour to feel at once their evidence and their energy; having the same spirit of faith which wrought in the apostles and prophets, and engaged them to discharge their office with such distinguished fidelity, fervour, and zeal. Especially let us maintain such believing apprehensions of this great and comprehensive truth, that God hath raised up Christ Jesus from the dead, and that he will by the same power also raise up his faithful ministers and servants, who firmly retain that glorious gospel; and as 14
those discoveries are made for their sakes, that they may obtain salvation by him, and that God may be glorified in their united and everlasting praises, let us daily set before our eyes this risen and triumphant Redeemer, and look forward to that glorious appearance of his, when he shall come to be admired in his saints, and to be farther extolled and glorified in all them who believe. Amen.

SECT. VIII.

The apostle describes the glorious hopes which he had beyond the grave, as his great support and ground of triumph under all those trials which he had been mentioning before; and endeavours to animate others to fidelity and zeal by that description. 2 Cor. iv. 16, to the end. Chap. v. 1—10.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 16.

SECT.
VIII.2 Cor.
iv. 16.

WE have been speaking of the great design of God, in causing his gospel to be revealed to the children of men, that the thanksgivings of many may redound to his own glory; and on this account we faint not under any of the present pressures, nor suffer ourselves to be borne down by the assaults of our enemies; but on the contrary, if our outer man perishes, yet the inner man is daily renewed: the soul gathers new strength, as the body grows weaker and weaker, and we feel our dissolution approaching; 17 which may well be the case. For we have the firmest assurance, that this momentary lightness of our affliction, which passes off so fast, and leaves so little impression, that it may justly be spoken of as levity itself, is working out for us a far more exceeding [and] eternal weight of glory,^a the most solid, substantial, and lasting felicity, the exalted degrees of which none of the boldest figures of speech can paint, nor any stretch of 18 human thought distinctly conceive. And we may assuredly promise ourselves that this shall be the blessed end of all, while we are conscious that we are not aiming^b at the things which are visible, are not endeavouring to secure to ourselves any secular advantages of one kind or another; but at those which are invisible. And however vain and visionary such views may seem to the world about us, and we may be despised for attending to them, we have full sa-

2 COR. IV. 16.

FOR which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the

^a *A far more exceeding, &c.*] This sentence is one of the most emphatical in all St. Paul's writings; in which (as Dr. Grosvenor well expresses it,) he speaks as much like an orator as an apostle. The lightness of the trial is expressed by το ελαφρον της θλιψεως, the lightness of our affliction; as if he had said, it is even levity itself in such a comparison. On the other hand, the καὶ ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν, is (says Mr. Blackwall,) infinitely emphatical, and cannot be expressed by

any translation. It signifies, that all hyperboles fall short of describing that weighty eternal glory, so solid and lasting, that you may pass from one hyperbole to another, and yet when you have gained the last, are infinitely below it. Blackw. Sacr. Class. Vol. 1. p. 332.

^b *Are not aiming, &c.*] This σκοπεῖν exactly signifies; and our English word scope or mark aimed at, is derived from the same Greek theme.

things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen, are eternal.

2 Cor. v. 1. For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven:

3 If so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked.

4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed,

tisfaction in our own minds that we are acting the wisest part, in such a choice and preference; *for the things which are visible*, and in that respect may seem to have the advantage of others, [are] temporary and transient; but those which are invisible [are] eternal, and therefore suitable to the duration of that immortal soul which God hath given us, and in the felicity of which our true happiness must consist. Nor is this an uncertain or very distant hope; for we know assuredly, that if our earthly house of [this] tabernacle were dissolved, if this mortal body, constituted of dust, were mouldered back to dust again; or if our zeal for the service of the gospel should bring on martyrdom, which should destroy it before its time; we have, and should immediately enter on, a building of which God is the great Architect and Donor; an house not made with mortal hands,^c nor to be compared with the most magnificent structure they ever raised, exceeding them all in its lustre, as much as its duration; though that duration be eternal in the regions of the heavens, far above either violence or decay. And in this view we groan through that intenseness of soul with which we are earnestly and perpetually desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven: Since being so clothed upon, we shall not be found naked and exposed to any evil and inconvenience, how entirely soever we may be stripped of every thing we can call our own here below. And moreover, we who are yet in [this] tabernacle do groan, not only with those longings after a blessed immortality, but also being burdened with the present weight of many infirmities and many calamities: for which cause nevertheless we would not be unclothed, or stripped of the body; for that is what we

SECT.
VIII.

2 Cor.
iv. 18.

2 Cor.
v. 1.

^c Not made with hands, &c.] Whether we consider this divine building as particularly signifying the body after the resurrection, in which sense Dr. Whitby takes it; or any vehicle in which the soul may be clothed during the intermediate state, considerable difficulties will arise. I am therefore inclinable rather to take it in a more general view, as referring to the whole provision God has made for the future happiness of his peo-

ple, and which Christ represents as his Father's house, in which there are many mansions. To be clothed upon with an house, is a very strong figure; which yet it is evident the apostle uses in the next verse; having in his thoughts the glory which each should wear, instead of being clothed, as now, with that mortal flesh which he calls a tabernacle, as it is so mean, inconvenient, and precarious an abode.

SECT. cannot consider as in itself desirable; but rather, if it might be referred to our own choice, *but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*

2 Cor.
v. 4.

clothed upon immediately, with a glory like that which shall invest the saints after the resurrection; that so what is mortal, corruptible, and obnoxious to these disorders, burdens, and sorrows, may all be so absorbed and swallowed up by life, as if it were annihilated by that Divine vigour and energy which shall then exert itself in and upon us.^d

5 *Now he who hath wrought us to this very thing, to these noble views and sublime desires, [is] God;^e who hath also given us the earnest of his Spirit, as the pledge of better, even of eternal blessings. Therefore, under the influences of*

this Divine Spirit, [we are] always courageous in the midst of surrounding danger; and whatever natural aversion we have to death, are ready to brave its terrors, in the views of that immediate happiness which lieth before us: knowing, that while we are sojourning in the body,^f we are, as it were, in a state of exile from the Lord Jesus Christ, in the enjoyment of whom our

chief happiness consists: For we now walk and conduct ourselves, in the whole course of life, by the faith of objects as yet unseen; and not by the sight of those glories or by a regard

8 *to those things which we can see. We are courageous therefore, [I say,] in these delightful views, and think with complacency of being rather absent from the body, and banished from all its pleasures and enjoyments, on condition of being, as we know we shall be, present with the Lord,^g and dwelling as those who*

5 For he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight.)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

^d *That mortality may be, &c.]* The expression in these and the following verses is not perfectly distinct; but the meaning seems to be this: "That though it appeared most desirable of all to pass to glory without dying, yet a state in which mortality should be swallowed up by life, was at all events desirable; and an absence from the body to be not only submitted to, but wished, in a view of being so present with the Lord, as even in the intermediate state they expected to be."

^e *He who hath wrought us to this very thing is God.]* Mr. Howe observes, that this is a most emphatical manner of speaking; not only asserting that God is

the author of it, but ascribing Deity to the author; as if he had said, "None but God could have raised us to such a temper." Howe's Works, Vol. I. p. 680.

^f *Are sojourning in the body.]* So ἐνδημεῖς here properly signifies; and it is, as Dr. Clarke observes, wrong to render it, *while at home in the body*; since it is the apostle's design to intimate that this is not our home.

^g *Present with the Lord.]* From this text Mr. Boyse argues not only against the sleep of the soul during the intermediate state; but that saints, when departed from our world, go into the highest heaven; where they dwell with Christ,

9 Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him. are at home with him. *Therefore we make it the height of our ambition,^h that whether present in the body or absent from it, we may be well pleasing to him, and receive the tokens of his acceptance and favour.* SECT. VIII. 2 Cor. v. 9.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. This is our concern, and it ought to be the concern of all; *for we must all, without any exception, whatever our station in life may have been, be manifest before the tribunal of Christ; our inmost soul must there be displayed, and all the most secret springs of our actions laid open, that every one may then receive, in that final distribution of happiness and misery, according to what he hath done in the body, whether good or evil; in full proportion to his actions, and the principles from which the Searcher of hearts knows them to have arisen.* 10

IMPROVEMENT.

BEHOLD the great lesson which as Christians we have to learn, and which is of such efficacy, that if we thoroughly master it, all the other parts of our duty will become easy and delightful—to look at the things which are unseen, rather than at those which are seen! And what can be so reasonable, as that eternal objects should employ the thoughts of immortal beings, rather than those which they must soon survive? Let all our souls be directed to them. Let us contemplate the feeble structure of this earthly tabernacle, which gives us so many tokens of its nearly approaching dissolution: this tabernacle, in which we groan under such a variety of burdens; and let us comfort ourselves with the prospect of speedy deliverance; that so while the outer man perisheth, the inner may be renewed day by day. What though we have death before us in a certain prospect, and know we must soon be absent from the body? If we are true Christians, we have the most express assurance, not only that the time will come when we shall inhabit a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; but that we shall immediately be present with the Lord, with that blessed Redeemer, whom having not seen we love. How much more shall we love him, how much more shall we rejoice in him, when we are blessed with his presence, and behold his glory! Ver. 18. Chap. v. 1. 14 Chap. iv. 16.

While we have this consciousness, let us be always confident

and are not, as some have supposed, in a place where they have only a transient sight of him on some extraordinary occasions. Boyse's Four Last Things, p. 592.

^h *We make it the height of our ambition.* This φιλοτιμουμεθα plainly imports; and it is flat to translate it, *we labour*.

SECT. and courageous, and rejoice in afflictions and mortality; since
VIII. this light and momentary affliction hath so happy an influence
Chap. upon a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; and
iv. 17. death will be the consummation of our wishes. Let this then
Chap. be our constant care, to walk by faith and not by sight; having
v. 7. this ever for the glorious object of our ambition, that whether
9 present or absent, we may be accepted of the Lord. May God
5 work us up to this self-same thing; and may the operation of
his grace upon our souls for that purpose, be always acknow-
10 ledged with the humblest gratitude, and its farther communica-
tions sought with the most earnest importunity! Then shall we
not dread the tribunal of Christ, before which we are so cer-
tainly to appear and be made manifest; knowing that our in-
tegrity will be approved, and that those works of faith and la-
bours of love which shall then be commemorated, will meet
with gracious acceptance and most munificent rewards.

SECT. IX.

*Touching again upon the zeal with which he prosecuted the gospel minis-
try, the apostle makes a kind of apology for it, by pleading the irresist-
ible engagements of a Redeemer's love, and the infinite importance of
that message of reconciliation with which he was charged; and which
while he recounts, he prosecutes in a pathetic address to the Corin-
thians. 2 Cor. v. 11, to the end. Chap. vi. 1, 2.*

2 CORINTHIANS V. 11.

SECT. I HAVE now touched upon a consideration, 2 COR. V. 11.
IX. which animates us to that zeal in our minis-
2 Cor. trations with which many are so much sur-
v. 11. prised, and some not a little displeased. We
often reflect how near the solemn time is ad-
vancing, when we and our hearers shall appear
before the tribunal of Christ; and knowing there-
fore the terror of the Lord, the strict judgment
which must then pass on all impenitent sinners,
we, for their sake, and for our own, labour to
our utmost to persuade men to take all necessary
methods for escaping it. But as we are made
manifest to God, and think of it with unutter-
able pleasure that he knows the integrity of our
hearts, in prosecuting the work he hath assigned
us, I hope also we are manifest to your consciences,
and that I have already given, and shall con-
tinue to give, such proofs of the simplicity of

2 Cor. v. 11.
KNOWING there-
fore the terror of
the Lord, we persuade
men; but we are made
manifest unto God,
and I trust also are
made manifest in
your consciences.

my views and uprightness of my conduct, that you will not be able to harbour any suspicion concerning it. SECT. IX.

12 For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that you may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart.

I say these things freely; *for we do not*, after the modesty and humility with which we have behaved hitherto, now begin to applaud ourselves, or *recommend ourselves again unto you*,^a as some have very unjustly charged us with doing in some former instances; *but we are giving you occasion of rejoicing and boasting on our account*, as you have indeed cause to do: and are suggesting what may be sufficient, *that ye may have something to [answer] those who glory in appearance, and not in heart*; for that, I am persuaded, is the case with some of your opposing teachers, whose consciences must surely recoil upon them and condemn them, while they pretend to vie with us in the discharge of the Christian ministry, and would challenge your regards in preference to us.

2 Cor. v. 12.

13 For whether we be besides ourselves, *it is to God*; or whether we be sober, *it is for your cause*.

For if, as some injuriously insinuate, *we be* ¹³ *transported beyond ourselves*,^b and the due exercise of sober reason, *[it is] to God*; a zeal for his glory that animates us; *or if we be sober*, as we hope you cannot but acknowledge us to be, *[it is] for your sakes* that we take so much serious pains in the prosecution of a work in which your highest interest is concerned. On the whole, love to God and benevolence to man are the grand principles by which we are actuated; and we cannot be cold and unaffected, while we have such grand and noble subjects before us as those which we handle among you,

^a *We do not recommend ourselves again unto you.*] It appears from hence, and from the beginning of the third chapter, that the Corinthians were ready to misrepresent the care St. Paul took to vindicate himself, as *pride and vain-glory*. On the other hand, they would have interpreted his *silence* as the effect of *guilt and confusion*. He therefore plainly and very properly tells them, that he said this only in his own necessary defence, and to furnish his friends with an answer to those whose consciences condemned them, while they endeavoured to asperse him.

^b *Transported beyond ourselves.*] Mr. Locke thinks, from comparing chap. xi. 1, 16, 21; chap. xii. 6, 11; that the Corinthians censured St. Paul as a fool

or a madman, for what he said in commendation of himself; and then the meaning is, "You say I am distracted for my present conduct; but this is between God and myself. I am sure you Corinthians ought not to say it; for all my sober thoughts and most painful labours are for you." But I apprehend on the whole, that the divided clauses are to be taken in such an united view, as to give the sense with which the paraphrase concludes; that it was *piety to God, and charity to them*, which wrought up the apostle's mind to that transport which some were so ready to censure; and that a lively view of the *love of Christ* produced such warm impressions of both.

SECT. to awaken our piety and our charity. *For the*
 IX. *love of Christ*, so illustriously displayed in that
 redemption he hath wrought, constraineth us ;
 2 Cor. it *bears us away*^c like a strong and resistless tor-
 v. 14. rent ; *while we thus judge*, and, in our calmest
 and most rational moments, draw it as a certain
 consequence, from the important principles,
 which we assuredly know to be true, *that if one*,
 even Christ, *died for* the redemption and salva-
 tion of *all* who should sincerely believe in him
 and obey him, *then were all dead* ; for had not
 all, even the very best of men, been in a state of
 condemnation and death, there would have been
 15 no need of his dying for them. *And now we*
 know that *he died for all*, that *they who live*
 only in consequence of his dying love, *should*
not henceforth, from this remarkable period and
 era of their lives, (whatever they have former-
 ly done,) *live to themselves*, so as to make their
 own will their rule, or to seek any interest of
 their own distinct from his ; *but that they*
 should all agree that they will live *to the ho-*
 nour, glory, and interest of *him who died for*
them ; and, when he *rose again* from the dead,
 retained the same affection for them, and is con-
 16 tinually improving his recovered life for their
 security and happiness. *So that*, on the whole,
we from this time forward know not any man af-
ter the flesh ; we have no longer any partial re-
 gard for any, on account of their being Jews
 by birth or religion, or as to the aspect which
 their friendship for us may have on our secular
 interest ; *and if we have known Christ after the*
flesh, and governed ourselves by any carnal ex-
 pectations from the Messiah, as a temporal
 prince, who should render our nation the ter-
 ror of the whole world, and raise us to univer-
 sal monarchy, *henceforth we know [him]* in
 these views *no more*, but entertain quite different
 17 sentiments concerning him. *And thus it will be*
 with others who enter truly into the genius of
 the gospel ; *so that if any man [be] really in*
Christ Jesus, if he have a vital and prevailing
 faith in him, *[there is] a new creation in the heart*

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead :

15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh ; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

17 Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ;

^c *Bears us away.*] This is the beautiful import of *συνεχεται*, which suggests a noble simile, which few translations preserve. See the note on Phil. i. 23.

old things are past away; behold all things are become new.

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be

of that man; so entirely are his principles, apprehensions, and pursuits changed; *old things are passed away*, and with respect to him, *behold all things are become new*; he is brought as it were into another world, and is himself quite a different creature from what he before was. And 18 as it is the work of God to create, so here it may properly be said that *all things [are] of God, who hath in his infinite condescension conquered our prejudices, and reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ*; having by his grace in him laid a proper and honourable foundation for the exercise of his mercy towards us, and for the subduing of our hearts to love and obedience. And in pursuance of this great and condescending design, he hath committed to us his ministers, and especially to his apostles, *the ministry of reconciliation*; intrusting us with this important message, to proclaim it to the world, and, so far as in us lies, to transmit it to the remotest ages. And this is an abstract and epitome of it all; *namely, that God was in Christ united to him, and manifesting himself by him, thereby reconciling the world both of Jews and Gentiles unto himself*; and in consequence of that, *not imputing to them*, and charging to their account, with righteous inexorable severity, *their various and aggravated offences*: but setting forth an act of grace and unlimited pardon to all those who should believe in him. This is that great divine truth on which our salvation depends; and God hath committed unto us, as a trust of the highest importance, *the gracious word or message of reconciliation*. Therefore 20 we are to be considered by you as sustaining the office and dignity of *ambassadors for Christ*,^d on his account, and in his stead; so that God is, as it were, *intreating [you] by us*, and we beseech [you] in Christ's stead,^e with the greatest importunity and tenderness of address, *that*

SECT.
IX.
2 Cor.
v. 17.

^d *Ambassadors for Christ.*] The apostles were so in a peculiar sense; but if it be the will of Christ that ministers in all ages should press men to accept the treaty of reconciliation established in him, then it is evident they may be called *his ambassadors*, even though such

a phrase had never been used in scripture.
^e *In Christ's stead.*] So ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ plainly signifies here. When Christ was in the world, he pressed this treaty of reconciliation, and we rise up in his stead to urge it still farther.

SECT. when so much is done on God's part to make ye reconciled to
IX. up the breach, which must otherwise have been God.

2 Cor. fatal to his offending creatures, ye would not,
v. 20. by your own obstinacy, reject the benefit of all
these condescending overtures; but would be
cordially and truly *reconciled to God*, and thank-
fully accept of that friendship and protection

21 which he vouchsafes to offer you. And that
your hearts may, if possible, be melted, we urge
you by the most affecting of all arguments, even
the blood and death of his incarnate Son: *for*
we tell you that *he*, that is, God, *hath made him*
who knew no sin, but was perfectly innocent
and perfectly holy, [a] *sin-[offering] for us*;
that, by the sacrifice of himself, he might ex-
piate the guilt of our transgressions, and *that so*
we might be made accepted in him, and furnish-
ed with a plea, as prevalent for our justifica-
tion and admission into the Divine favour as if
we had retained our innocence untainted, and in
every respect conformed ourselves to the *right-*
eousness which the law of God^f required and
demanded. We then, [as] the joint-labourers [of
2 Cor. vi. 1. God] in this important work, (compare 1 Cor.
iii. 9, note ^f;) *beseech [you] with the most ear-*
nest importunity, that you receive not the surpris-
ing grace of God in vain; that you do not so
slight this merciful proclamation of pardon,
righteousness, and life, through the blood of his
2 Son, as to lose the benefit of it. Again, let
me urge immediate compliance with it on all
who have not as yet secured its invaluable bless-
ings; *for he says*, when represented as address-
ing himself to the Messiah,^g in one of Isaiah's
prophecies, (Isa. xlix. 8.) *I have heard thee in*
an acceptable time, and in a day of salvation
have I helped and sustained thee. God there,

21 For he hath
made him to be sin
for us, who knew no
sin; that we might
be made the right-
eousness of God in
him.

2 Cor. vi. 1. We
then as workers toge-
ther with him, beseech
you also that ye re-
ceive not the grace
of God in vain:

2 (For he saith, I
have heard thee in a
time accepted, and
in the day of salva-
tion have I succoured

^f Made the righteousness of God.] That
is, divinely righteous. It is a very strong
phrase to signify our being accepted of
God as perfectly righteous, when con-
sidered as by faith united to him who was
perfectly so. There is an evident and
beautiful contrast between *Christ being*
made sin and *our being made righteousness*,
that is, treated as perfectly righteous.

^g Addressing himself to the Messiah.]
I think it evident that, as these words

stand in Isaiah, they are a promise made
to Christ; in which God engages to give
him the Gentiles as an accession to his
church, and reward of his mediatorial
undertaking. And in this connexion,
it is as if the apostle had said, " Since
" such a promise is made, see to it that
" you seek it, and you will find it an
" acceptable time." You will come, as
it were, in a good hour, as Christ is re-
presented to have done.

thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.) as you see, speaks of a limited time, in which the Messiah's petition in favour of his people was welcome to him, and in which he was ready to grant salvation; and *behold, now [is] the accepted time; behold, now [is] the day of salvation*: this is the precious season, when, by the wonderful favour and goodness of God, complete forgiveness and eternal felicity is freely offered. Oh that you may all be so wise as to accept it!

SECT.
IX.
2 Cor.
vi. 2.

IMPROVEMENT.

How adorable is the Divine condescension, that such an embassy of peace should ever be sent to any of the children of fallen Adam! How wonderful the Divine patience, that the accepted time and the day of salvation should, after so many slights, be so long protracted! O, let us not receive such grace in vain, lest affronted mercy should forsake its seat, and give way to inexorable justice!

Chap.
vi. 2.

Surely if there be a sentiment that may justly excite the heart to the greatest fervour of affection, and that will vindicate the most ardent transports of zeal to spread it in the world, it must be that of the love of Christ; which may well bear us away, while we seriously consider in how miserable a state he found us, dead in sin, and under a sentence of death by the Divine law; especially when we farther reflect at how expensive a rate he redeemed us, even with the price of his own life. Who, then, that has any remains of judgment at all, must not judge and determine in his own mind, that it is most fit that our ransomed lives should be sacred to him that redeemed them; that our breast should be on fire with the most earnest desires to promote his cause and kingdom; that henceforth, from the time we come to the knowledge of this important truth, we should not live to ourselves, but to him who died for us and rose again, resuming, with his renewed life, the same tender concern for our happiness which engaged him continually to exert it in the most generous efforts for our recovery and salvation.

Chap.
v. 14.

14, 15

Let all secular views, therefore, be given up; and let us labour to improve in that renovation of soul which is the essential character of the true Christian; and as ever we desire to have any satisfactory evidence that we are in Christ, let us see to it that we are new creatures; and if we are indeed so, let us daily acknowledge our obligations to his transforming grace. From him are the first proposals of peace and reconciliation to offending creatures; from him the disposition of soul, humbly to submit ourselves to the terms so kindly proposed, and to sue

SECT. out our own pardon agreeably to the purposes of this grand
 IX. act of indemnity. How amazing the condescension that grants
 Ver. it, and appoints ambassadors to urge us to have compassion on
 19, 20. our own souls, and not reject this counsel of God against ourselves! May the ministers of the gospel often consider themselves in this view, as ambassadors and agents for Christ, by whom God beseecheth sinners to be reconciled; and let them prosecute this embassy with all holy importunity and earnest address. Oh that the success of it may be more apparent; that so that friendship might be established between earth and heaven, which may bring down daily anticipations of heaven to earth! Amen.

SECT. X.

The apostle enlarges with great freedom on the temper with which, in the midst of all their afflictions and persecutions, he and his brethren prosecuted that important embassy of which he had been speaking in the former section. 2 Cor. vi. 3—10.

2 CORINTHIANS VI. 3.

SECT. **T**HIS is the affair we negotiate, this is the
 X. message we deliver; and while we are thus
 employed, it is our constant care that we may
 2 Cor. behave in such a manner as may add the great-
 vi. 3. est efficacy to our address, and *give no offence*^a
 to any *by any part of our [conduct;]* that the
 ministry of reconciliation be not blamed, and the
 4 success of the gospel thereby obstructed. But
 on the contrary we would be, and I hope we
 are, *in every respect approving ourselves* to all
 that see and know us, such as they ought to be
 who have the honour of being *the ministers* and
 ambassadors of God; in this view we govern
 the inmost emotions of our souls, endeavouring
 to possess them *in much patience*, in the midst of
 all the afflictions which his providence calls us
 to bear, *in all the necessities* we are compelled to

2 COR. VI. 3.

GIVING no offence
 in any thing,
 that the ministry be
 not blamed:

4 But in all things
 approving ourselves
 as the ministers of
 God in much pa-
 tience, in afflictions,
 in necessities, in
 distresses,

^a Give no offence, &c.] This clause is so connected with the foregoing, that it would have been highly expedient to have continued the preceding section, at least to the end of this; but the length would be inconvenient. And there are some other instances in which we have been forced to yield to necessity on such occasions; but the common division which separates the last verse of the 5th chap-

ter from the first of the 6th, seems yet more improper. To render the beginning of the section less apparently abrupt, I render that *we give no offence*, which had more literally been translated by the participle *giving*, &c. as in the following clauses; but such little variations, as they affect not the sense, will I hope be excused, as what on my plan I knew not how to avoid.

endure, in all the *straits* to which we are at any time reduced, and all the anguish of heart we

SECT.
X.

may unavoidably feel in them.^b This steady patience we endeavour to maintain, in stripes, when we are scourged in synagogues and cities, as if we were the most notorious offenders against God and men, and the vilest pests of society: in imprisonments, though we not only endure so many hardships in our confinement, but are cut off by it from these public labours for the glory of God and the edification of the church, which are dearer to us than our lives: in tumults,^c which are raised against us by Jews and Gentiles, and by which our enemies are often endeavouring to tear us in pieces: in labours, which we incessantly pursue, either in our ministerial work, or in those secular callings by which we are often obliged to earn our daily bread: in watchings, when, in prosecution of these various employments, the hours of the night are added to those of the day, and we have hardly time for our necessary repose: in fastings, to which, besides those which devotion chooses, we are often obliged to submit, for want of proper supplies of food: Yet still, in the midst of all these difficulties, conducting ourselves in unspotted purity, labouring to improve daily in the knowledge^d of those divine truths which it is our great business to teach others, and by the exercise of a constant command over our passions to grow in long-suffering and in gentleness, and every other amiable

2 Cor.
vi. 5.

⁵ In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings,

⁶ By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy

^b Afflictions—necessities—straits.] Dr. Whitby thinks the first word, *θλίψις*, signifies affliction in general—the second, *ἀνάγκη*, more grievous and unavoidable troubles—and the third, *ἐννοχώματα*, such pressures as reduce us to the greatest straits: the compound sense therefore on the whole is, we are, as it were, hemmed in with inevitable, and humanly speaking, inextricable calamities, on every side. Compare sect. vii. note c.

^c In tumults: *ἀνταρρασιαίς*.] Beza interprets this, (and I think no man seems better to have understood the peculiar propriety of Greek words,) of such attacks as a man cannot stand against, but which bear him hither and thither by violence: he would render it in Latin, *exagitationibus*.

^d By knowledge.] Interpreters give many different senses of this word. Dr. Scott says it signifies prudence, which is a Christian virtue, whereas the mere understanding of Divine things was a gift. Mr. Pyle thinks it signifies their improving the knowledge of Divine mysteries. Mr. Cradock refers it to an acquaintance with the true sense of scripture; which brings it to much the same with what has been called the word of knowledge. I conclude it implies not only a solicitude to grow in the knowledge of the gospel, but to improve that knowledge to the edification of others; which accordingly is expressed in the phrase.

SECT. disposition, which we cultivate in humble dependence on the sanctifying influences of the *Holy Spirit*; who dwells in our hearts, as a continued principle of that *undissembled love* which we exercise without limitation, not only to friends and benefactors, but enemies and persecutors. Still we are faithful in asserting and zealous in propagating the sacred gospel, that word of uncorrupted and infallible truth; and we persist in it, supported by the almighty power of that God by whom it is revealed, and by whom we know it shall be rendered finally victorious; and in the mean time, while our enemies assault us on every side, it is our care still to be clothed and girded about with the armour of righteousness, both on the right hand and the left;* well knowing that armour to be impenetrable.

x.
2 Cor.
vi. 6.

Ghost, by love unfeigned,

7 By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

8 And in this consciousness we pass unhurt, and in a great measure unmoved, through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report, neither elated with the one nor depressed and dejected with the other. We are treated by many, as if we were a set of artful deceivers, that scruple no fraud and falsehood by which we might carry our cause; and yet we know in our own conscience, and God can witness for us, that we are true and faithful, and would not deviate from the strictest rules of integrity to carry any point, how important soever it might seem to ourselves, or the religion we propagate.

8 By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true;

9 We are treated by men as inconsiderable creatures, in the lowest rank of life, obscure and unknown, as undeserving any public notice and regard; and [yet] we are really well known to multitudes by the happiest tokens, as the men by whom they have not only received that bodily healing which they could never have expected from natural means, but by the yet more valuable memorials of having enlightened their eyes with divine knowledge, and brought back their wandering souls to God. We are regarded by

9 As unknown, and yet well known;

* *Armour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left.*] Some unnaturally think this alludes to the soldiers, who were taught to wield their swords with the left hand as well as the right; and others, that it refers to the Christian's

being armed against the temptations of prosperity and adversity. That may well be included; but the armour spoken of seems of the defensive kind, on the arms or breast, or both.

as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed;

others as *dying* men, and we seem ourselves to be in daily danger of being sacrificed to the rage of our enemies; and *yet behold* hitherto, through the guardian and astonishing care of that Redeemer whom we preach, *we* continue in life, and *live* to the most important purposes. Our afflictions are many, and we consider ourselves under them as *chastened* by our heavenly father; *yet*, blessed be his name, we are *not killed*; and far from intending our destruction, we know that he will overrule these chastisements to the advancement of our salvation. If our external circumstances alone be regarded, we must indeed appear as *sorrowful*, and the world will naturally conclude that we have cause for continual lamentation; and *yet* when the inward dispositions of our minds are known, and the views with which we are secretly supported, it will be found that we are *always rejoicing*, in the present assurances of the Divine favour, and the certain expectation of complete felicity and eternal glory. We appear as *poor* in this world, and indeed we are so; having neither silver nor gold, nor estate; and *yet* we are continually *enriching many* with treasures which they would not part with for all the revenues of princes and kings; as *having nothing* that we can call our own, and *yet* indeed *possessing all things*, which we know to be ours, so far as our heavenly Father shall see fit; and therefore are as easy and happy as if we were actually the proprietors of the whole world.^f

SECT.
X.
2 Cor.
vi. 9.

10 As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich: as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHOSE soul can remain untouched while he reads this eloquent period, in which the apostle's mouth is (as he afterwards expresses it) thus opened, in consequence of his heart's being enlarged? In how lively yet unaffected a manner does this sacred writer paint his own character and circumstances: and how much profound and important sense is there in those paradoxes which he so naturally introduces on this occasion! Let the ministers of the gospel herein behold, at once, their model

^f Possessing all things.] This is certainly one of the sublimest passages that was ever writ. Compare Phil. iv. 18. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Eph. i. 3. Rev. xxi. 7. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23.

SECT. and their support. Let them cultivate this inoffensive behavi-
 x. our, not only out of regard to themselves, but that their office
 — may not be censured; and still approve themselves the servants
 Ver. of God, by patience amidst all their tribulations, their necessities,
 3, 4 and their pressures; and, so far as their circumstances require it,
 by labours, by watchings, and fastings: especially when by an
 indulgent Providence they are not called to do it in stripes, in
 5, 6 imprisonments, and in tumults. Still let them cultivate purity
 and knowledge, long-suffering and gentleness, with unfeigned
 love in the Holy Ghost. Aided by him, let them arm them-
 selves with the word of truth, and, in the strength of God, gird
 on the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.
 7 Thus fortified they may boldly break their way through honour
 8 and infamy, though praise and reproach; as we plainly see that
 infamy and reproach may be the portion of the best of men
 and the most useful members of society. Who are we, that we
 should refuse a cup of which the apostles and our Lord drank
 9 so deep? But let us be superior to human censures. If any call
 us deceivers, let us show that we are invariably true to the in-
 terests of God and of goodness. If they affect to overlook us as
 unknown and beneath their notice, let us endeavour to render
 ourselves well known, by the benefits which, by Divine grace,
 10 we are the instruments of conferring on men's souls. So shall
 we be always rejoicing in the midst of those sorrows of which
 nature cannot be entirely insensible; whilst amidst our poverty
 we are enriching many, yea then, though we have nothing that
 we can call our own, we shall possess all things; shall appear in
 the eyes of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, the richest and
 the happiest of mankind, even though we were in other re-
 spects of all men the most miserable.

While we consider this as the character of the first preachers
 of Christianity, which with so noble a plainness and simplicity
 they profess, let us adore the Divine grace, by which such a
 spirit was raised in the world, and by which it hath in some
 measure been maintained, even to this day. And let it encour-
 age our most earnest and affectionate prayers, that God would
 raise up in every age (and especially in our own, in which they
 seem so ready to fail) a generation of evangelical ministers; who,
 fired with such generous principles of action, and emulating so
 noble a character, may commend themselves to every man's
 conscience in the sight of God, and roll away that reproach
 which unworthy men have brought on the most excellent of all
 offices. Thus armed, may they extend their happy conquests;
 thus animated, may they see of the travail of their soul, to
 their abundant, their everlasting satisfaction and delight.

SECT. XI.

The apostle urges the Corinthians to avoid those alliances with idolaters, which might tend to ensnare them; and pleads the gracious promises God had made to his people, as an engagement to them to be upon their guard in this respect; and in general, to aim at the sublimest attainments in religion. 2 Cor. vi. 11, to the end. Chap. vii. 1.

2 COR. VI. 11.

O YE Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.

2 CORINTHIANS VI. 11.

YOU see, O ye Corinthians, my dear brethren, my beloved children, with how

SECT. XI.

much freedom of address *our mouth is opened to you*; but words flow freely on an occasion on which *our heart is so much enlarged*, in a tenderness which neither words nor tears can

2 Cor. vi. 11.

12 Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.

sufficiently express. Sure I am that *ye are not straitened in us*; all that we can do for your comfort and happiness you may securely promise yourselves: *but I fear ye are straitened in your own bowels*, and have not all of you that

13 Now for a recompense in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye enlarged.

affection for us, nor readiness to receive our communications, which the relation between us might challenge, and my tenderness for you ought to excite. And *therefore, for that very recompense* which we most of all desire, which is so just and reasonable, and which indeed, in its consequences, would be yet more beneficial to you than delightful to us, *I speak to you as to [my] own children*, with all the genuine overflowings of paternal love: *be ye also thus enlarged^a towards me*, and let this confidence with which I am pouring forth, as it were, all my heart into your bosom, strike strongly on your minds, to raise some correspondent emotion.

14 Be ye not un-

And how shall that love be expressed? Truly by no method can it more effectually be manifested, than by taking all the care you possibly can for your own security and happiness. In which view I must particularly urge it, that ye

^a Be ye also enlarged.] Perhaps the apostle's meaning may be this: "Give me that pleasure which my paternal tenderness towards you will find, in having it in my power to do abun-

dance of good, through your readiness to perceive what we are so ready to impart, and to fall in with my attempts of usefulness among you."

- SECT. *be not unequally yoked either in marriage, or any*
 XI. *other intimate friendship, with unbelievers; for*
 2 Cor. *what participation hath that strict righteousness*
 vi. 14. *to the practice of which the gospel calls you,*
its sincere votaries, with that unrighteousness in
which they are so generally plunged? Or what
communion hath the light, into which you by the
Divine mercy are brought, with that deplorable
darkness of ignorance and vice in which they
 15 *continue to be lost? Or what concord [is there,]*
or can there be, between Christ, to whom ye are
united, and Belial, who reigneth in the chil-
dren of disobedience? Or what part hath a be-
liever with an infidel; or an infidel with a be-
liever? The union is surely, at the first view
 16 *of it, too unnatural to be either easy, safe, or*
lasting. And indeed I may say, what consist-
ence has the temple of God^b with those detest-
able idols, which would by this means be, as
it were, erected in it; or at least placed so near,
that it must be polluted by them? It is a proper
question, and a just view in which to state the
point; for ye are the temple of the living God, as
God himself hath said, I will, in the most inti-
mate manner, dwell in them^c and walk among
[them,] and I will be their God, and they shall
be my people. (Lev. xxvi. 12.) Now though this
immediately refers to God's extraordinary pre-
sence among the Jews, yet, when we consider
the constitution of the Christian church, we can-
not possibly imagine that God is less favourably
present with it than he was with the Jewish.
 17 *We may therefore consider the exhortation so*
naturally grounded on such a promise, and may,
as it were, hear God calling to us, and saying,
as to Israel with respect to idolaters of old,
(Isa. lii. 11.) Come out from among them, and be

equally yoked to-
 gether with unbeliev-
 ers; for what fellow-
 ship hath righteous-
 ness with unright-
 eousness? and what
 communion hath
 light with darkness?

15 And what con-
 cord hath Christ with
 Belial? or what part
 hath he that believ-
 eth with an infidel?

16 And what agree-
 ment hath the temple
 of God with idols?
 for ye are the temple
 of the living God; as
 God hath said, I will
 dwell in them and
 walk in them; and I
 will be their God,
 and they shall be my
 people.

17 Wherefore,
 come out from a-
 mong them, and be

^b *Temple of God.]* There seems a pe-
 culiar strength in this interrogation. If
 God would not endure idols in any part
 of the land in which he dwelt, how much
 less would he endure them under his
 own roof.

^c *In the most intimate manner dwell*
in them.] No words I know in our lan-
 guage can equal the force of the origi-

nal, ἐνοικησάτω ἐν αὐτοῖς, *I will take up my*
indwelling in them. This was a promise
 made to the Jews on their being con-
 verted, and consequently refers to their
 privileges as members of the Christian
 church; which shows the propriety of
 the application, Jer. xxxi. chap. xxxii.
 37, 38.

ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you:

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

2 Cor. vii. 1. Having, therefore, these promises, (dearly beloved,) let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

ye separate,^d saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and if ye behave in a manner thus worthy your professed relation to me, *I will then receive you*, which till then I cannot do:

And will be a father unto you,^e and ye shall be to me for sons and for daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Now surely if the Almighty God will say thus unto us, we ought to be much affected with it, and neglect nothing that is necessary to insure so great and invaluable a privilege.

Having therefore, my beloved brethren, such gracious promises of God's abode among us, his dwelling in us, and his adopting us into the number of his children, let us act worthy so high a relation, and as God is perfectly holy, let us labour to the utmost to *purify ourselves from all pollution, both of the flesh and of the spirit*, from every impurity of life, and from every sensual affection which might defile our hearts, and render them displeasing to him. Nor let us rest merely in this negative view of religion; but let us endeavour to be *perfecting holiness*, and lay the foundation of it *in the fear of God*, in whose presence we always are, and by whom all our actions are examined, and to whom our hearts are open; well knowing that we cannot secure to ourselves these blessings without such a care; and that it is what gratitude most powerfully dictates, where we have the highest hopes that we are interested in them.

IMPROVEMENT.

THUS may cordial love open the mouth of Christian ministers when addressing their people; and thus may the love of Christians to each other in every station of life express itself, and produce for a recompense a mutual enlargement. This is one of the sweetest pleasures and richest blessings of friendship, when wisely and happily contracted. Let us therefore cultivate such

^d *Be ye separate.*] As God's promise of dwelling in a peculiar manner among the Jews, obliged them to separate themselves from the converse of their heathen neighbours, that they might not be ensnared with their superstitions; much more are Christians obliged by that peculiar gracious presence of God which they enjoy, to separate themselves from all impure and idolatrous worship. Exod. xxix. 45, 46; Lev. xxvi. 11, 12.

^e *I will be a father, &c.*] It is queried where God says this? Some answer Jer. xxxi. 1. But that does not sufficiently express the paternal relation. Others refer to 2 Sam. vii. 8, 14, which may be applied to Christ, and in him to believers. Compare Heb. i. 4, 6. Some think it is not expressly to be found any where, and that it refers to all the scriptures where God calls his people by the title of children.

SECT.
XI.
2 Cor.
vi. 17.

2 Cor.
vii. 1.

Ver. 11.

12

SECT. XI. friendships, and be very careful that we do not form others which may properly be called being unequally yoked. We profess to be pursuing righteousness, to be light in the Lord, to be united to Christ, to be consecrated to God: let us not then have an intimate converse with the slaves of unrighteousness, the children of darkness, the sons of Belial, the votaries of idols. Far from subjecting ourselves to such dangerous snares, let us rather be earnestly seeking every advantage for making the noblest improvements in religion. Let us examine our lives and our hearts, that we may be cleansed from all pollutions of the spirit as well as of the flesh. Let us labour after sublime ideas of the perfection of holiness, and after a temper of mind correspondent to those ideas. In order to attain which, let us often be surveying our high and glorious privileges, and those exceeding rich and precious promises which God by his gospel is making to us; separating ourselves from all evil, that he may receive us, that he may dwell with us and walk among us, that he may consecrate us a holy temple to himself; yea, that the Lord Almighty may become a Father to us, and own us for his sons and his daughters. To us is the word of this promise sent, this is the hope of our calling: let us make it sure, let us daily survey it, that it may produce and cherish a correspondent sanctity and zeal. Amen.

Ver. 14, 16

Chap. vii. 1.

Chap. vi. 17, 18.

SECT. XII.

The apostle farther expresses his affection to the Corinthians, as illustrated by the pleasure with which he received good tidings from them by Titus, and by the part he took in the sorrows which his necessary reproofs had occasioned, and his present joy in that these sorrows had issued in their reformation. 2 Cor. vii. 2, to the end.

2 CORINTHIANS VII. 2.

SECT. XII. **B**UT to return from this digression to the attempt I was making to remove some prejudices which, much to your own detriment, I know that some of you have imbibed against my person and ministry. Give me leave, my brethren, to intreat you that ye receive us with that affection which is due to the faithful servants of Christ, and to those who have been instruments in your conversion and edification: for whatever may have been insinuated by ill-designing persons to the contrary, *we have injured no man in his person, we have corrupted*

2 Cor. vii. 2.

2 COR. VII. 2.

RECEIVE us: we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we

have defrauded no man. *no man in his morals, we have defrauded no man*^a in his property, by any of those artifices which covetousness sometimes practises under very solemn forms. *I speak not [this] to condemn [you] of ingratitude or infidelity, though I have been obliged to find some fault with you; for I have told you before, that ye are in our hearts with such tenderness, that, if it were the will of God, we could be glad both to live and to die with [you;] to spend the remainder of our lives at Corinth, or to end them there, did not the purposes of our Master's glory call to other, and many of them less grateful and agreeable scenes.* SECT. XII.

3 I speak not this to condemn you; for I have said before, that you are in our hearts to die and live with you. *for I have told you before, that ye are in our hearts with such tenderness, that, if it were the will of God, we could be glad both to live and to die with [you;] to spend the remainder of our lives at Corinth, or to end them there, did not the purposes of our Master's glory call to other, and many of them less grateful and agreeable scenes.* 2 Cor. vii. 3.

4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. *Great, as you see, [is] my freedom of speech to you upon this subject, and great is also my boasting concerning you, as to the assurance which I have of your regards for me; and, on this account, I am filled with consolation in the remembrance of you; I do exceedingly abound^b in joy, in the midst of all our affliction, when I think how well you behave, and how happy an alteration is prevailing among you.*

5 For when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. *An instance of this affectionate regard I have lately had an opportunity deeply to feel, and very naturally to manifest: for when we came into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted in every [place] and circumstance, through the rage and malice of our enemies; yet these alarms could not cause us to forget you; but while without there [were] continual fightings, with the most furious and cruel opposition, within there [were] fears and anxieties on your account. But the blessed God, who is pleased to wear it among his other titles, that he is the Comforter of those who are brought low by affliction and distress, and owns it as his prerogative to bear up the human heart, comforted us by the coming of Titus, who arrived so seasonably at Macedonia, at a time when both our circumstances and frame of spirit needed all the assistance that so pious and delight-*

^a Defrauded no man.] The word ἐπιβουλεύομεν signifies to indulge a covetous temper, and make a prey of others by it; and perhaps intimates that the false teachers, of whom he had so much reason to complain, had done it.

^b Exceedingly abound.] The word ὑπερπερισσεύομαι has an inexpressible energy; and is, if I mistake not, a word of the apostle's own making.

SECT. ful a friend could give. And indeed it was not
 XII. merely by his coming that I was thus comfort-
 ed, but with the consolation with which he was
 2 Cor. comforted by you, when he told us particularly
 vii. 7. of your earnest desire to rectify whatever was
 amiss, and of your grief for what had been mat-
 ter of offence to God and sorrow to me, and of
 your affectionate zeal for me, so that I rejoiced
 much more than in other circumstances I could

8 have done. Because now I can take the liberty
 to say, that if I grieved you in the epistle which
 I formerly wrote, in which indeed I was obliged
 to treat some subjects with greater severity
 than I could have wished, I do not repent of it,
 however anxious I might before have been;^c for
 the regret I at first felt on that account is now
 swallowed up in that superior pleasure with
 which I see the happy effects of it; for I now
 have the satisfaction to find that this epistle,
 however for a little while it might have grieved
 you, hath by the blessing of God been produc-
 9 tive of great good. And now I rejoice not that
 ye were grieved, for that will always give me con-
 cern when I reflect upon it, but that ye grieved
 to such happy purpose, and were by that means
 brought to true repentance, to a change of mind;
 for this was indeed the case, as ye were grieved
 with a penitential and humble regard to the ho-
 nour of the blessed God, who is so immediately
 and peculiarly affected by the irregularities of
 those that profess themselves his people. So
 that, on the whole, ye were not in any degree en-
 damaged by us; but, on the contrary, received,
 as we intended, great benefit by the severity
 10 we were compelled to use. For this is indeed
 the natural effect of a sorrow like yours; that
 grief which regards the honour of God, and takes
 its rise from such tender and grateful views of
 him as we before hinted, worketh a repentance
 which leads to salvation and issues in it, and

7 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

8 For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though it were but for a season.

9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not

^c However anxious I might before have been: *ε καὶ μετμελομένην.*] So I chose to render the word, as *μεταμέλεια* strictly expresses an after-care and anxiety for any thing that has been done; whereas the word *repent* always signifies a wish it had not been done. Now, as what St. Paul did, in writing the former epistle, was proper, and done under the direction

of the Divine Spirit, it does not seem reasonable to suppose that he really repented of it. It may also signify a kind of misgiving of heart, natural when the reproof, however necessary, is given to a person one tenderly loves, where the event is dubious, as in this instance it might be.

to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

therefore is never afterwards to be repented of; SECT. XII.
whereas the sorrow that arises merely from a regard to the things of the world, is often a foolish excess, productive of fatal consequences, and sometimes worketh death; either breaking the heart, arming men against their own lives, or otherwise producing that rebellion against God, by which the soul is finally destroyed.

2 Cor.
vii. 10.

11 For behold, this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you; yea, *what* clearing of yourselves; yea, *what* indignation; yea, *what* fear; yea, *what* vehement desire; yea, *what* zeal; yea, *what* revenge! in all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

But it is pleasant to trace the happy effects of 11
 that better principle which hath influenced you; *for behold, this same thing, that is, your being grieved for your sins out of a pious respect to God and the dishonour it brought upon him, what diligence it wrought in you to reform what had been amiss; yea, [what] a solicitous care to make the best apology you could for what you had done; and of the sounder part, to make their innocence appear; yea, [what] indignation did it produce against those who had given the offence; yea, [what] fear lest any thing of that sort should be encouraged and repeated; yea, [what] earnest desire of seeing me again, and confirming our friendship in surer bonds; yea, [what] zeal in every method that could be subservient to these views; yea, indeed, if I may so express myself, [what] revenge^d against yourselves for those things which, all circumstances considered, you could not but condemn; against sin as your great enemy: so that upon the whole, considering you as a society, you have approved yourselves to be pure in this matter, and there is no farther stain remaining on the church, where I was so much afraid of lasting infamy and reproach. Let it not therefore be 12*

12 Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, *I did it* not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but

the cause of any farther distress; but assure yourselves, that *if I have written [any thing] to you* different from what I could wish to write and you to receive, *[it was]* not so much with any personal views on his account who had done, or his who had received the injury,^e but for the

^d Yea, *what* revenge.] Mr. Gataker has very well observed here, that Calvin and Reynolds, and some other divines of note, have been misled, by taking it for granted that these verses contain seven distinct marks of true repentance, to be found in every sincere penitent; whereas

indeed these are not characters of the temper of each, but of different persons in different circumstances, according to the part they respectively acted in the affair in question.

^e Received the injury.] Hence some infer, and it seems reasonable, that the

SECT. *sake of manifesting our diligence and care for*
 XII. *you, which through the Divine goodness hath*
 now been made apparent, though by so severe
 1 Cor. and painful a trial, before God, [and] unto you.

vii. 12.

13 *Therefore we were greatly comforted in your consolation, and we rejoiced more exceedingly in the joy of good Titus, which gave me a pleasure yet greater than he himself could derive from it; because we find your temper and state so good, that his spirit was refreshed by you*

14 *all. So that, on the whole, if I had boasted any thing of you to him, that I was confident my Corinthian friends would approve themselves worthy of the figure they had formerly made in religion, I was not ashamed of that boasting; but as we have always spoken in the exactest regard to truth when addressing ourselves to you, so also our boasting [concerning you] to Titus, that all would be well again at Corinth, has been verified greatly to our satisfaction:*

15 *So that his tenderest affections are now engaged towards you exceedingly; which he expresses in the most genuine manner whenever he mentions or recollects the obedience of you all in general to those apostolical injunctions which I sent you by him: [and] how you received him as my messenger and the minister of Christ, with fear and trembling, expressing always the most solicitous concern that he might see nothing which it might grieve him to observe,*

16 *or me to hear reported by him. I rejoice, therefore, that in every respect I have confidence in you,^f and am encouraged to renew that honourable testimony which it has always been my pleasure to bear to your character, and which, I assure myself, you will continue more and more to deserve.*

13 Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.

14 For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth.

15 And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him.

16 I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 3. How great is the boldness of a good conscience! and how much does it promote that freedom, that authority, with which the ministers of Christ address themselves to their hearers,

father of the incestuous person was still living, which must be a great aggravation of his crime.

^f Confidence in you.] The address of all

this part of the epistle is wonderful. This in particular finely introduces what he had to say in the following chapter, and is strongly illustrated by chap. ix. 2—4.

when they can thus appeal to them as to the uprightness, integrity, and disinterestedness of their conduct! Frequently do we in some degree share the trials of the apostle; and while we may be surrounded with fightings without, are exercised with fears within; but we have a God who assumeth it to himself as one of his titles, that he comforteth those that are cast down and brought low. May every sincere lover of Christ and of souls be filled with consolation from him, and amidst all his tribulations, whatever they are, be made to rejoice exceedingly in the joy of his Christian friends and converts! May he trace in them the marks of that true repentance which is never to be repented of, and which is represented in such genuine language as no heart could have dictated but one that had felt what is here described. And since there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not, and consequently none who needed not repentance, may we all know by experience that diligence, that indignation, that fear, that zeal, that desire, that revenge, which the apostle saw in his Corinthian brethren, and which he rejoiced so much to see! There is not a surer office of friendship than to endeavour to promote this godly sorrow. And oh how blessed, how divine a principle is religion, whose most painful operation is productive of so much inward and substantial happiness! whereas the sorrow of this world, to which they who fondly love the world, and eagerly pursue it, are most exposed, is attended with such fatal consequences, as even to work death.

Let us observe with pleasure the address of St. Paul to make the Corinthians what they ought to be, by representing to them that pleasing confidence he reposed in them, the manner in which he had even boasted of them, and the satisfaction he found in all their first tendencies towards a reformation of remaining defects. And let us earnestly pray for the spirit of wisdom, that our hearts may be happily attuned to such due mixtures of faithful inspection, resolute sincerity, and endearing tenderness with respect to all who are committed to our care, whether in offices of a public or private nature, as may most effectually promote their advancement in the divine life, and our own abundant joy.

SECT.
XII.

Ver. 5.

10

17

9

10

14, 16

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SECT. XIII.

The apostle enters on the subject of the contribution he was setting forward for the relief of the poor Christians of Judea, recommends to the Corinthians the example of the Macedonians, reminds them of the great grace of our blessed Redeemer, and gives some advice as to the manner of collecting and transmitting their bounty. 2 Cor. viii. 1—15.

2 CORINTHIANS VIII. 1.

SECT.
XIII.2 Cor.
viii. 1.

NOW we think it proper, brethren, to inform you of the happy and honourable effects of that abundant communication of the grace of God,^a which has been mercifully bestowed upon the churches planted here in Macedonia, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and other places in this province: which has engaged them to exert themselves in a most liberal and generous contribution for the relief of the poor saints in Judea. And here it would be a pleasure to me more particularly to tell you, *how in a great and extraordinary trial of affliction*, which they met with from their persecuting enemies, who were always so ready to harass and plunder them, (compare Acts xvi. chap. xvii.) *their overflowing joy* for receiving the Christian religion, and with it, if I may so speak, *the depth of their poverty* amidst these distresses of their own, *hath so abounded* and furnished such supplies *to the riches of their liberality*, that indigent as they are, they have done wonders for the relief of their yet poorer brethren. So that I can testify for them, and I do attest it with pleasure, *that to the utmost extent of [their] power, yea, and beyond what could have been expected, or, on the usual principles of computation, judged to have been in [their] power,*^b [they

2 COR. VIII. 1.

MOREOVER, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:

2 How that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty, abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 For to their power, (I bear record,) yea, and beyond their power,

^a *Grace of God.*] As χάρις sometimes signifies a gift, and things excellent and extraordinary in their kind are in Hebrew often said to be *things of God*, or *Divine*; as *trees of God* are great and flourishing trees; *cities of God* great cities; (compare Psalm lxxx. 10; Acts vii. 20.) some have explained χαρις τῆς Θεοῦ, as if it signified the *great or liberal gift* which has been given in or by the Macedonian churches; and Dr. Whitby very sufficiently proves that χάρις sometimes is put for *gift*. But considering what is the general sense of the word in St. Paul's writings, and what

his sentiments evidently are as to the doctrine of divine influences on the heart, I chose to follow the plainest and most obvious and common interpretation, which indeed I generally think the best, and take this verse to be in sense much equivalent that pious acknowledgment of David, 1 Chron. xxix. 14, *who are we, that we should be able to offer so willingly?* &c.

^b *To their power, yea, and beyond that.*] This is a noble hyperbole, like that of Demosthenes, "I have performed all even with an industry beyond my power."

they were willing of themselves:

4 Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own-selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God:

6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and know-ledge, and in all dili-gence, and in your love to us; see that ye abound in this grace also.

8 I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sin-cerity of your love.

9 For ye know

have been] willing of themselves, without my soli-citation, to do the most generous things for the public service: At the same time entreating us with much importunity, that we would receive the gift which their bounty had prepared, and [take] a part of the ministration of the saints, as one of their commissioners to convey it to Je-rusalem. And [this they did,] not merely as we expected and hoped, but even beyond all we could have imagined; for they first gave them-selves and all they had entirely to the honour and service of the Lord; and having thus sur-rendered all they were, and all they possessed, to Christ and his cause, they in effect resigned themselves to us by the will of God, putting themselves in this respect under my direction, to do what I should in conscience think most advisable in present circumstances. Insomuch that, unable to withstand their pressing solici-tation, we desired Titus, that as he had begun to do in other places, so he would also complete this instance of grace and liberality among you,^c and finish what yet remains to be done as to col-lecting the intended contribution.

Therefore, my brethren, as ye abound in every other [gift,] (1 Cor. i. 4—7; chap. xii. 8—10.) and particularly in faith, which raises to the fullest persuasion of the truth of the gospel, and in all utterance and ability to instruct others, and in the clearest knowledge of Divine things, and in all active diligence, and in your affectionate love to us; so [we exhort] and in-treat [you,] that ye would take this opportu-nity of showing that ye abound also in this grace of Christian liberality. And here you will ob-serve that I speak not by way of command, so as to take upon me to determine how much or in what proportion ye shall give; but that I may prove by what I have just been saying of the diligence of others, that is the Macedonians, the genuine sincerity of your love in its most substantial effects.

And I may well expect that you should exert

^c Complete this grace among you.] I doubt not that χάρις here signifies gift, or present, or liberality; but I thought that retaining the word grace here might

make the English reader more sensible of the ambiguity and emphasis of the word usually rendered grace.

SECT. XIII.
2 Cor. viii. 4.

SECT. yourselves on such an occasion, in consequence
 XIII. of your acquaintance with the great and most
 ——— fundamental principles of the gospel, in which
 2 Cor. you have been so faithfully instructed. *For you*
 viii. 9. *know* in some measure, though it is impossible
 for you fully to know and distinctly to conceive in its utmost extent, *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich in the glories of the heavenly world, and in supreme dominion and authority there, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you, through this his voluntary poverty, might not only be discharged from that dreadful debt you had contracted to the Divine justice, by which you were become obnoxious to everlasting ruin and condemnation; but that you might also become rich in the favour of God, and in the graces of the Holy Spirit now, and at length for ever rich in the treasures and glories of the heavenly world:*

10 *And as I cannot but desire that the servants of so excellent a Master may herein imitate his example, and take the most effectual methods to advance his honour and interest in the world, I give [my] advice to you in general to despatch this affair vigorously; for this is evidently expedient for you, and consistent with what you have already in a manner bound yourselves to, as you have begun not only to do something, but also to exert yourselves^d resolutely and determinately*

11 *a year ago. I now therefore entreat you not to be offended if I urge you to complete your undertaking, that according to the readiness which you expressed to determine and resolve upon this good scheme, there may also be the accomplishment of that determination in proportion to what you have.*

12 *The smallest contribution from such a principle will be pleasing to God, and most assuredly draw its reward after it; for if there be first a readiness of mind according to what a man hath, [he is] accepted of God, [and] not according to what he hath not: a little in proportion to his abilities is pleasing to God; yea, more pleasing than it would be if this proportion were less prudently observed.*

the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

10 And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.

11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.

12 For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

^d *To exert yourselves.] It is evident that το θειον is an advance upon ποισειν. So that it must signify a resolute and vigorous determination. Compare 1 Cor. xvi. 2.*

13 For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and you burdened:

14 But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want, that there may be equality.

15 As it is written, He that *had gathered* much, had nothing over; and he that *had gathered* little, had no lack.

I say [this,] not by any means that [there should be] a rest to others and affliction to you, that they should be eased and you overburdened; But that of an equality, on just and equitable principles, your abundance [may be,] at this time, wisely and happily employed, as [a supply] to their want: that at some other time, if Providence give the occasion and opportunity, their abundance also may be [so] to your want; that there may be such an equality in the distribution of the good things of this life, as our mutual relation to each other may require. For the bountiful providence of God hath furnished them out in such an abundance, and given to some of you such a superfluity, that there is room for a liberal distribution, without injuring the original possessor; and if such a distribution be made, we shall find that, as it is written concerning the manna, (Exod. xvi. 18.) He that [had] much did not abound when all came to be divided, and he that [had] little did not lack; so he that has the greatest abundance of this world, may find necessitous objects enough, and he that is most destitute, will be competently supplied, if his richer brethren do their duty in this respect.

SECT. XIII.
2 Cor. viii. 14.

IMPROVEMENT.

How peculiarly amiable does the Christian liberality of these Macedonians appear, when considered as abounding in a great trial of affliction, and in the depth of their poverty; yet a poverty mingled with an abundance of joy, on account of that rich and happy state into which the gospel had brought them, and the first-fruits of that glorious inheritance to which they were entitled by the tenor of it. They were willing of themselves to contribute, even beyond their power, as persons of common generosity would have estimated it. Nor did they on their dying beds repent such a use of their property, or wish

^e That their abundance, &c.] It might seem obvious to object, that the Corinthians were rich and prosperous, the Jews poor and oppressed; so that there was no room to expect that this should happen. But it might be replied, "All human affairs are uncertain; Corinth itself, from great prosperity, had been utterly undone in the Roman war by Memmius some time before: or particular persons might be distressed, or

" the whole body of Christians there reduced by persecutions, though their city continued to flourish."

^f He that had much, &c.] Perhaps nothing could more illustrate the powerful agency of the Divine Providence, in events which seem most contingent, than this, that though such different quantities of manna were gathered by different persons, yet on an average there should be an omer for each,

442 *The Apostle blesseth God for the zeal of Titus in this affair:*

SECT. that it had been spent in gratifying their appetites, or hoarded
XIII. for those they were to leave behind them. Nor do they now
— regret these liberalities, or complain that their expected harvest is perished.

Let us remember their example for imitation; nor let any who have a mite to spare, be wholly deficient, how low soever their circumstances may be; remembering that gracious complacency, with which, where there is a willing mind, the smallest
Ver. 12. tribute to the treasury of God is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not. To animate
9 us to the most generous efforts of overflowing benevolence, may we ever bear in our mind that grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, of which we all know something, but which it is impossible we should ever fully know, because it passeth knowledge: that grace which engaged him, when rich, for our sakes to become poor, that we might be enriched by his poverty. What have we that deserves to be called a possession, which we do not hold by an act of Divine bounty and grace?

Let us consider ourselves as under indispensable engagements, in consequence of it, to consecrate our all to him, conscious that our all is but a low return for the infinite obligations under which he has laid us. He hath contrived and determined, that the poor in some form or another we should have with us always, that we may do them good, as a token of our gratitude
15 to him. Let us faithfully aim to supply their need, and he who hath most will have no superfluity to throw away upon the lusts or vanities of life; and he who hath least, will have no unsupplied lack: but the poor will rejoice in the relief of their necessities; and the rich, in the happiest and most delightful use of their abundance.

SECT. XIV.

The apostle expresses his joy for the readiness of Titus to assist in finishing the collection; and speaks of the honourable character of other Christian brethren, whom he had joined with him in the same commission. 2 Cor. viii. 16, to the end.

2 CORINTHIANS VIII. 16.

SECT. **BUT** while I speak of this collection, which
XIV. I am desirous of promoting, [I] would [re-
— turn] my humble thanks to God, who gave that
2 Cor. same diligent care for you in the heart of Titus,
viii. 16. and formed him to these generous and Christian
17 sentiments. For indeed he not only cheerfully
accepted and complied with the exhortation I
gave him; but being more forward than I

2 COR. VIII. 16.

BUT thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

17 For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his

own accord he went unto you.

thought to have found him, *he went to you freely of his own accord*, though he must see that some pressing and peculiar difficulties would attend the undertaking.

SECT.
XIV.

2 Cor.
viii. 17.

18 And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel, throughout all the churches:

And we have also sent together with him that

excellent Christian brother^a and friend, Luke, whose praise in the gospel [is] in all the churches, on account of the various and eminent services that he has done for the interests of Christianity, wherever his influence has extended, both by his writing and exhortations.

19 (And not that only, but was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind:)

And not only is 19 he so^b much esteemed on these accounts, but he was also ordained and appointed by the stretching forth of the hand, in token of the common consent of the churches, whom we consulted on this occasion, particularly in Macedonia, to be our fellow-traveller with this grace which is now administered and undertaken by us, purely for the glory of the same Lord, and for [the declaration of] your ready mind, in which I was desirous to let you know how heartily I concur.

20 Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us;

And we now send him to you, and I have determined to join a man of his excellent character with me; carefully avoiding this, that any one should blame or throw any reflection upon us, for the part we may take in the management of this abundance of your bounty, which is administered by us; lest any should be so unjust and cruel as to insinuate that I have appropriated any part of it to my own use, or to any purpose whatsoever different from that for which it was originally given: Therein providing

21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of

things decent, honest and honourable, not only before the Lord, to whom it is our first and chief

^a That brother, &c.] Some suppose this anonymous, though excellent person, to have been Mark or Silas, or Barnabas; but I rather, with most commentators, suppose it to have been Luke, who certainly attended St. Paul in his journey to Jerusalem. Some object, that the brother here spoken of was sent by St. Paul to Corinth, in company with Titus; whereas Luke went with St. Paul to Troas, and from thence to Corinth, Acts xx. 4, 6. But Dr. Whitby replies, I think with some considerable weight, that it is possible St. Paul might go from Philippi to Corinth, and from thence to Troas, and so persons sent before to prepare his way might come and bring

word to St. Paul, that the collection was ready, and go back with him to receive it. See Whitby on chap. ii. 12. Many ancient Christians thought that expression, whose praise in the gospel is in all the churches, refers to the universal applause with which St. Luke's gospel was every where received; and I have paraphrased it so as to include that, though I think the apostle's meaning more extensive. See Gurdon at Boyle's Lect. p. 482.

^b And not only so.] This 19th verse is to be included in a parenthesis, and the continued sense of verses 18 and 20 will be, we have sent that brother—to avoid blame, &c.

SECT. care to approve ourselves, *but also before men*; the Lord, but also in
XIV. that we may guard as much as possible against the sight of man.

2 Cor.
viii. 22.

And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you. 22

that is, with Luke and Titus, our other friends, and well-beloved brother Apollos, whom we have often proved in many other affairs to be in a very extraordinary degree diligent; but who will now, I doubt not, approve himself much more diligent, and exert himself to the utmost in carrying on this collection, on account of the great confidence [I have] in you, as to your goodness and liberality: on which consideration he has changed his resolution against making you a visit; which, while he had any apprehension you might make him an occasion of quarrelling and contending, he would by no means be persuaded to do.

23 And if [there be any question] concerning Titus, [he is] my partner and my fellow-labourer with respect to you; one who sincerely shares my care for you, and is always ready to act in concert with me, in any attempt to correct what is amiss among you, and to promote your improvement in real Christianity. Or if the question be [concerning] any other of our brethren whom I have mentioned above, [they are] the messengers of the churches,^c whom several Christian societies have chosen to send about this business; and they are persons of so valuable a character, [and] do so great a credit to their profession, that I may not improperly call them *the glory of Christ* in the world. 23 Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner, and fellow-helper concerning you: or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ.

24 Show therefore to them, I entreat you, even in the sight of all the churches, to which they are related, and to whom they will undoubtedly make their report concerning you, the demonstration of your love, and the reasonableness of our boasting over you; that it may appear to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf. 24

^c *The messengers of the churches.* I can think of nothing more unreasonable than to translate this word, *apostles*; as the English word *apostles* is now by long use appropriated to what is only a signification of the original. As an *apostle of Jesus Christ* is one sent forth by him, so an *apostle of any church* must surely signify one sent forth by that society. And if I believed that there was so early, as at this time, a minister in every church, superior to a common pastor, which the most able

advocates for Diocesan episcopacy seem not generally to think, I could not imagine it consistent with the dignity and importance of their office, that they should be parted with on such an errand, which any common deacon might with sufficient propriety have performed. It is indeed true that St. Paul was charged with this trust; but then it seems to have been after he had determined on this journey to Jerusalem, and not to have been the occasion of that journey.

pear to be as well-founded as I assuredly believe that it is.

SECT.
XIV.

IMPROVEMENT.

THE tenderness of ministers in all points where the comfort and edification of the church is concerned, is indeed matter of the highest moment; and where it is remarkable in its degree, it affords just cause of thanksgivings to God: for it is Ver. 16. he who puts into their hearts that earnest care, who excites and maintains every sentiment of benevolence, when they offer themselves willingly to any generous and charitable service. 17 It is grace that has communicated whatever good is done; and it ought to be ascribed to the glory of the same Lord from whom it comes; and it loses much of its value, if it be not directed to this ultimate, this supreme end.

When the Corinthians desired to deposit their alms in the hands of St. Paul, they certainly acted a very wise part; as no man living could have rendered them more secure as to the fidelity or the discretion of the distribution. Yet we see, that 20 high as the Apostle's character stood, and though he had so often given, and was daily renewing such striking demonstrations both of his wisdom and integrity; yet he would not undertake the trust alone, but used all proper methods to approve his exactness in the management thereof, even to strangers; providing things honest and laudable, not only in the 21 sight of God, but of all men.

May ministers be often thus employed, as the almoners of persons richer than themselves, (as their readiness to help the poor in their temporal affairs may greatly promote their usefulness in spirituals;) and may they be found to manage their trust with the like conscious and delicate honour. May they show a disposition, like that of St. Paul, to assist in establishing 23 and advancing the characters of their younger brethren, and introducing them into esteem and confidence. Thus will they indeed most effectually strengthen their own hands, and edify and comfort the churches; will prove the glory of Christ themselves in the present age, and be the means of raising up others who may eminently deserve that illustrious title, in succeeding generations.

SECT. XV.

The apostle goes on, with admirable address, farther to urge their liberal contribution; and in the full expectation of it, affectionately recommends them to the Divine blessing. 2 Cor. ix. 1, throughout.

2 CORINTHIANS IX. 1.

SECT.
XV.2 Cor.
ix. 1.

NOW concerning the ministration intended to relieve the necessities of the saints or believing brethren in Judea, *it is superfluous that I should write largely to you, in order to persuade you to the thing itself: it is sufficient that I give you a transient hint concerning the time and manner of doing what is necessary or proper on this occasion. For I have known in former instances, and have now again learnt from Titus, your extraordinary readiness on this head; which I indeed boast concerning you to the Macedonians, that all the region of Achaia, and particularly your church in its capital city, has been prepared a year ago; and your zeal in this respect hath quickened many others to imitate your example, and do more generously than perhaps they might otherwise have done. Nevertheless, I have sent unto you the brethren I mentioned before; lest our boasting of you on this head, that, as I said, ye were prepared before, having made up your sum, should, by any accident which might have prevented your accomplishing the whole of your design, in any degree be made vain, and appear ill-grounded: Lest if any of the Macedonians happen to come with me, and after all find you unprepared, the money which has been subscribed not being actually collected, we may be ashamed, not to say you also, in this confident boasting we have used concerning you, and which may recoil in a very unhappy manner, if it be not answered. Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren I have mentioned, that they should come to you some time before my arrival, and should first complete your bounty which had been spoken of before^a so largely to them; that so, on the whole, it may be entirely*

2 COR. IX. 1.

FOR as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2 For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you shall be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:

4 Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might

^a Your bounty which had been spoken of before.] We render προαληγγελμένην, whereof ye had notice before. But I suppose it refers to St. Paul's having spoken of it to the Macedonian Christians, verse 2.—I think πλεονεξία here signifies a kind of extortion, by which

money is, as it were, wrung from covetousness, by such obstinacy as covetous people themselves use where their own gain is concerned; and thus it is opposed to εὐλογία, what is readily given, and comes, as it were, with a blessing.

be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.

6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound towards you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10 Now he that

ready, and may appear, as what I doubt not but it is, the effect of free and cheerful bounty, and not look like a sort of extortion, wrung from you by mere dint of importunity. And as to this, it is an important maxim, which I could wish that Christians might always keep in mind, That he who soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he who soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully: God will bestow rewards proportionable to what is given, and to the temper from which it proceeds. With this hint, I leave it to every one to judge for himself what he shall give, and how much seed he shall throw into this grateful and fruitful soil.

Whatever it be, more or less, let it be given 7 with a good will and a good grace; every man as he chooseth in his own heart, not as proceeding from grief or necessity, as if he were sorry to part with his money, and were laid under a kind of constraint to do it; for God loveth a cheerful giver: and nothing that is contributed can possibly be acceptable to him without that truly liberal disposition.

And lest you should fear that your charity 8 should bring you into wants and straits, I entreat you to consider, that God [is] able to make all grace and bounty of every kind to abound towards you,^b so that all your liberality shall accrue to your advantage, and you shall be supplied with abundant matter for future charity; that having always all sufficiency in all things, ye may go on with new enlargement and vigour of generous resolution, to abound to every good work, without finding your circumstances straitened. As it is written of the truly liberal and 9 charitable man, (Psal. cxii. 9.) He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, and in consequence of this, his righteousness endureth for ever: he shall always have something to bestow.

We observe in the course of Divine Provi- 10 dence, that God blesseth the increase of the earth so largely, as to suffice for the plentiful nourishment of men, with a remainder of seed

SECT. XV.

2 Cor. ix. 6.

^b All grace to abound, &c.] Some by *χρησις* understand such liberal providential supplies as should furnish out matter of future liberalities; but the more exten-

sive sense I have given it, prevents that appearance of a tautology in the following clause, which might on that limited interpretation be apprehended.

SECT. sufficient to furnish the harvest of future years. ministereth seed to
 XV. *And may he, who thus supplieth seed to the sower,* the sower, both mi-
 2 Cor. *and bread for food, supply and multiply your* nister bread for your
 ix. 10. *sowing,^c and largely increase the productions of* food, and multiply
your righteousness: may he so prosper you in your seed sown, and
all your affairs, that you may have future ca- increase the fruits of
capacity to exercise that liberal disposition which your righteousness;)

11 at present appears in this contribution. And I 11 Being enriched
 heartily wish and pray that you may go on in in every thing to all
 this laudable and exemplary course, *being in* bountifulness, which
every thing enriched to all future bounty, to be causeth through us
distributed in the simplicity of your hearts, thanksgiving to God.
with a single eye to the glory of God and the
good of your brethren; which, in the instance
wherein it has already prevailed, worketh by our
means thanksgivings towards God, both in us
 12 those indigent Christians who receive it. For 12 But the admini-
the ministration and management of this service,^d stration of the ser-
which we have undertaken, and in which we do, vice, not only sup-
as it were, officiate for you in the presentation plieth the wants of
of this acceptable offering, doth not only supply the saints, but is
the necessities of the saints, but aboundeth, abundant also by
through the thanksgivings of many which it oc- many thanksgivings
 13 casions, to the glory of God: Of many, I say, unto God;
who by the experience of this ministration, this 13 (Whiles by the
generous contribution, are glorifying God on experiment of this
account of that subjection to the gospel of Christ ministration they
which you profess,^e and the simplicity and liber- glorify God for your
ality of your communication towards them, and professed subjection
towards all others who are in necessity, and unto the gospel of
 14 whom you have an opportunity of relieving. And Christ, and for your
while they thus glorify God on your account, liberal distribution
they are constant and fervent in their prayers for unto them, and unto
you, who long after you,^f and wish earnestly to see all men;)
 14 And by their
 prayer for you, which
 long after you for

^c *He who supplieth—bread for food, supply and multiply, &c.]* This translation is exactly literal, and gives an easier sense than our English version. There should be a comma, as Beza justly observes, after *εις βροσιν*, agreeably to the rendering of the Syriac and Arabic. See Beza in loc. and Wolf. who refers to Isa. lv. 10.

^d *This service.]* This use of the word *λεησυα* intimates, that it was to be considered, not merely as an act of humanity, but of religion, most pleasing to God, and suitable to the nature

of the gospel dispensation. Compare Heb. xiii. 16.

^e *That subjection to the gospel of Christ which you profess.]* *Επι τη υποταγη της ομολογιας υμων εις το ευαγγελιον*, expresses not merely a professed subjection to the gospel, but a real subjection to the gospel which was professed; which sense I thought it necessary to preserve by a change in the version.

^f *And in their prayers, &c.]* The construction of the original is something perplexed here; and indeed I hardly know any text in the Greek Testament which

the exceeding grace of God in you.

and know you, on account of the exceeding grace of God which is in you, and which produces fruits so highly ornamental to Christianity.

SECT.
XV.

15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

When I think of these things, I desire sincerely to bless God on your account, for all the grace he hath given you, and for all the usefulness with which he is pleased to honour you. But I would trace up all to what is indeed the fountain of all his other mercies to us, his having bestowed upon us his dear and only begotten Son. *Thanks*, daily and everlasting thanks, [*be*] ascribed to our Father and our God, for that *his unutterable gift*,^s of the excellence, importance, and grace of which, neither men nor angels can worthily speak or conceive.

2 Cor.
ix. 15.

IMPROVEMENT.

HAPPY shall we be if we learn this pious and evangelical turn of thought; if by all the other gifts of God we are thus led up to the first and greatest gift of his love and mercy. From that surely we may encourage our hopes of whatever else is necessary and desirable; for he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how is it possible that he should not be ready, with him, freely to give us all things that are truly good for us!

Let us observe with pleasure the happy address of the apostle; a felicity not the result of craft, but of that amiable temper that was so natural to him. He pleads the high opinion he had entertained of his Corinthian friends, the honourable things he had said of them; expressing his persuasion of their readiness to give as matter of bounty, not of constraint. He leads them to the inexhaustible store of the Divine liberality, from which they had received their present all, from which he

is more so. But on the whole, I am ready to prefer the reading of *δοξαζοντων* instead of *δοξαζοντες*, (which Chrysostom followed;) and suppose both *δοξαζοντων* and *επιποθειντων* to agree with *πολλων*, and then the sentence might be rendered, *this ministration produces an abundance of thanksgiving to God from many who glorify him for your subjection to the gospel, &c. and in their prayer, that is, while they are praying for you, earnestly desire to see you, &c.* But the paraphrase here, as in several other places, hath obliged me to break the sentence; which I more readily did, as amidst this perplexity of grammar the design of the sentence is perfectly plain.

^s *Unutterable gift.*] If we understand this with Dr. Whitby, in the following sense: "I adore God for this *charitable temper* in you and other sincere Christians, by which God is glorified, the gospel adorned, the poor saints are refreshed, and you fitted for an exceeding great reward,"—it will be as remarkable a text as most in the Bible, to show that every good affection in the human heart is to be ascribed to a Divine influence. I have therefore included this in the paraphrase; but am ready to think the apostle's mind, to which the invaluable gift of Christ was so familiar, rather by a strong and natural transition, glanced on *that*.

Ver. 15.

SECT. wishes they may receive more and more; and this not that
 xv. these supplies might be ignobly consumed in self-gratifications,
 but employed in acts of the noblest beneficence. He represents
 Ver. to them the thanksgivings it had already occasioned to God, the
 7, 8. refreshment it administered to the saints, the honour it did to
 9—12 their character and profession, and the esteem and friendship for
 13 them which it excited in the minds of those, who, though unacquainted with them, were well affected towards their happiness, in consequence of this honourable specimen of their character. Who could withstand the force of such oratory? No doubt it was effectual to cultivate the temper it applauded, and to add a rich abundance to the fruits of their righteousness.

Let us apply these thoughts suggested for our own instruction, to excite us to abound in acts of liberality, and to present them to God with that cheerfulness which he loves. To him let us continually look to make all grace abound unto us; and seek a sufficiency in all things relating to the present life, chiefly that we may be ready to every good work; that our liberality may still endure, and that the multiplication of our seed sown may increase the fruits of our righteousness. To God be the praise of all ascribed! He ministers seed to the sower; he supplies bread for food; he calls up the blessings of harvest; he insures the advantages of commerce. May we praise him ourselves; and by the ready communication of the good things which he hath given us to those that want, not only supply their necessities, but give them cause of abundant thanksgiving to God, as well as in prayer for us, while they see and acknowledge that exceeding grace which is the spring of every generous motion in the human heart, and to which therefore be the glory of all.

SECT. XVI.

Some reflections having been thrown on the apostle for the mildness of his conduct, as if it proceeded from fear, he here proceeds to assert his apostolical power and authority; cautioning his opponents, that they should not urge him to give too sensible demonstrations of it upon themselves. 2 Cor. x. 1, throughout.

2 CORINTHIANS X. 1.

SECT. I HAVE just now been expressing my confidence and joy in your church in general, as
 xvi. well as my affection to it: but I am sensible there are some among you to whom I cannot speak in such a manner; and with regard to such, I Paul myself, the very man whom they have

2 COR. X. 1.
 NOW I Paul my-

2 Cor.
 x. 1.

self, beseech you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you.

so often spoken of with contempt and defiance, injured as I am, do yet condescend to *entreat you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ*, our condescending and compassionate Saviour, that meekness and gentleness which I have learned from his example, and desire to exercise towards the most unreasonable of my enemies; even I, *who [am,] according to your representation, and with respect to my person, when present, humble among you,*^a and despised for the meanness of my appearance, *but being absent am bold towards you*, and use so much freedom and authority in my letters; *However* I may be reflected upon and even insulted on this account; *I beseech you*, I say, as you love yourselves, and tender your own comfort and happiness, *that I may not, when I am next present, be obliged by your continued irregularity to be bold, with that confidence on which truly I think to presume with respect to some who account of us as persons walking in the flesh*, and affect at least to talk, though they have so little excuse for doing it, as if we governed ourselves by low and mercenary views. *For we are conscious to ourselves, that though we do indeed walk in the flesh, though we inhabit mortal bodies, and are obliged in some respects to stoop to the care of them, and to do many things for their subsistence, which take up the time we could much more agreeably spend another way; yet, God knows, we do not manage that important war in which we are engaged, according to the flesh, by carnal methods, or with wordly and interested views.*^b This⁴ you may easily perceive by the manner in which we are armed; *for the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal*: as we depend not on military force, so neither on beauty, stature, eloquence,

SECT.
XVI.
2 Cor.
x. 1.

2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present, with that confidence wherewith I think to be bold against some which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but

^a *When present, am humble among you.*] Probably they had upbraided and reflected upon him in some such language as this; but there was a sense in which he was indeed lowly among them, his presence probably having nothing majestic.

^b *Though we walk in the flesh, &c.*] Mr. Cradock explains this something differently, "Though we are not free

" from a mixture of human infirmities,
" yet I do not exercise my apostolical
" power in a weak manner, as either
" fearing or flattering men; but use
" such spiritual weapons as Christian
" fortitude, zeal, freedom in speaking
" the truths of God, and courage in
" administering the censures of the
" church, which, through Divine con-
" currence, are very effectual."

SECT. or philosophy, or in a word, on any thing which might recommend us to human regard; but
 XVI. might recommend us to human regard; but
 though destitute of these, we are furnished with

2 Cor.
 x. 4.

others much more valuable, by that Divine power, which would never exert itself for the secular advantage of persons professing, as we do, to despise the world, and seek for something so much above it, if we were not sincere in our profession, and authorised by him to maintain it. Yes, my brethren, God hath armed us for our warfare, by the miraculous powers of his Holy Spirit; and they are *mighty through God to the demolishing fortifications*, prejudices and difficulties, that like so many impregnable castles lay in our way, and yet are battered down and laid in ruins by these our spiritual weapons.

5 And thus we go on in our conquest; for we are continually *casting down* the fallacious and sophistical reasonings by which vain men are endeavouring to expose our doctrine to contempt, *and every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of God*, all the proud imaginations which men have entertained of themselves with regard to their natural or moral excellencies, in consequence of which they neglect the gospel, and are indeed ready to live without God in the world. *And thus we are enabled to bring every thought, every proud haughty notion which men have entertained, into an humble and willing captivity^c to the obedience of Christ*, the great Captain of our salvation. And as God is pleased thus to cause us to triumph in Christ, with regard to the opposition made by the professed enemies of the gospel, so let men regard us as persons *having it in readiness*, by miraculous powers and penalties inflicted by them, *to avenge all disobedience*, to chastise and punish the obstinacy of those who under a Christian profession pretend to oppose us; *now your obedience is fulfilled*, and the sounder part of your church recovered to its due order and subjection.

mighty through God,
 to the pulling down
 of strong holds;)

5 Casting down
 imaginations, and
 every high thing that
 exalteth itself against
 the knowledge of
 God, and bringing
 into captivity every
 thought to the obe-
 dience of Christ;

6 And having in a
 readiness to revenge
 all disobedience when
 your obedience is
 fulfilled.

^c *Every thought into captivity.*] The soul, seeing its fortifications demolished, submits to the conqueror; and then every thought, every reason, takes law from him. Nothing is admitted that contradicts the gospel; Christ being acknow-

ledged as absolute Master. The former clause shows how ready men are to fortify themselves against it, and to raise, as it were, one barrier behind another, to obstruct his entrance into the soul. Compare Rom. xv. 18, 19.

7 Do ye look at things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.

8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, (which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction,) I should not be ashamed:

9 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.

10 For his letters (say they) are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

11 Let such an one think this, that such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we

This is indeed the case, and I beseech you to consider it as it is. *Do you look at the outward appearance of things?* Do you judge of a man by his person or address, or by any one particular of his life? Surely you ought not to do it. *If any man be confident in himself that he is Christ's, let him again bethink himself of this,* which he will see evident reason to acknowledge, if he candidly and seriously examine, *that as he [is] Christ's, so we also [are] Christ's;* nor can any one produce more convincing proofs of Christ's calling him to the ministry, and approving his discharge of it, than myself.

For if I should boast something yet more, abundantly more than I have ever yet done, concerning our apostolical authority, which I am sensible the Lord hath given us for the edification of the church, and not for your destruction or the injury of any particular person, I should not have any reason to be ashamed, having already used it in a manner agreeable to its design.

And this I say, *that I may not seem as if I would by any means terrify you with my epistles, threatening more than I can perform; on the contrary, I might pretend to much more than I have done, and to execute, if need should require it, much greater severities in a way of miraculous punishment.^d And the hint is necessary; for I know there are some among you that would represent matters quite in a different light. [His] epistles, say they, [are] indeed weighty and strong, but [his] bodily presence [is] weak, and [his] speech despicable;^e for which indeed they have some excuse, as to my person, and the disadvantages attending my utterance. But let such an one, whoever he be, reckon upon this as a certain fact, that such as we are in word by our letters, when absent,*

SECT. XVI.

2 Cor. x. 7.

^d Miraculous punishment.] It is to be remembered it was before this time that the apostle had smitten Elymas with blindness; and it is highly probable from this text, and others of the like nature, that some other miracles of this awful kind had been wrought by him, though they are not recorded in scripture.

^e Speech despicable.] Chrysostom, Ni-

cephorus, and Lucian, or rather the author of the Philopatris, relate of St. Paul, that his stature was low, his body crooked, and his head bald, which seem to be the infirmities here referred to. Some think he had also an impediment in his speech; but I do not recollect any ancient testimony to that; though it is not improbable. Compare chap. xii. 7, and the note there.

SECT. *such [shall we be] also when present, in action; be also in deed when*
 XVI. *our deeds will fully correspond to our words, we are present.*
 — and we shall do something to vindicate these
 2 Cor. pretences, if their speedy reformation do not
 x. 11. prevent.

12 *For we presume not to number or to compare ourselves with some who recommend themselves in very high terms; but they thus measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves,^f while they proudly overlook the greatly superior characters and furniture of others, are not wise, nor do they indeed take the most effectual measures to raise their own character; but, on the contrary, in consequence of this, fall into many absurdities of behaviour from which greater impartiality and modesty, and a better knowledge of men*

13 *and things, would secure them. But we are always careful that we glory not of a distinguished zeal for the gospel carrying us beyond [our] bounds, but only according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us under the character of Apostle of the Gentiles, a measure to come even unto you; and accordingly we have regularly and gradually advanced towards you,*

14 *taking intermediate places in our way. For we do not extend ourselves excessively, as not regularly coming to you; like some who run abruptly from one church to another, leaving their work unfinished behind them, when they think they have discovered a place where they can meet with a more pleasant and agreeable reception. For, as I observed before, we are, by a regular progress, come even unto you in the gospel of Christ, having faithfully preached in the*

12 *For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves amongst themselves, are not wise.*

13 *But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.*

14 *For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you; for we are come as far as to you also, in preaching the gospel of Christ;*

^f *Measuring themselves by themselves:*
 17 *ἐαυτοῖς ἐαυτοὺς μέτρωντες.*] Dr. Whitby would render it *measuring themselves by one another*; as if they compared themselves with their false apostles, and grew proud on the degree in which they resemble them in acuteness and eloquence, or other things on which those deceitful teachers valued themselves. But it is more natural to think that the meaning is, “they looked continually on themselves, surveying their own great imaginary furniture, but not considering the vastly superior abilities of many others: and so formed a disproportion-

ate opinion of themselves.” And this is every where one of the greatest sources of pride. Bos has taken great pains to prove, that to *measure oneself by oneself*, is a phrase which expresses modesty, and making a right estimate of ourselves and others; and taking *συμβάλλω* not for a verb, but for the dative of a participle, would render it, *we measure ourselves by ourselves, and compare ourselves with ourselves, not with the wise, that is, ironically, not with such wise men as these.* But though this sense be ingeniously defended by that great critic, the other seems most natural.

15 Not boasting of things without *our* measure, *that is*, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly:

16 To preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

§ *In the regions beyond you.*] It would certainly have been a great pleasure to the apostle to have gone on to Arcadia and Lacedæmon, and to have proselyted those to the gospel who had been so long celebrated in the latter of these places for their valour and magnanimity, and in the former for their wit and poetry in those agreeable and rural retreats. But we do not read any thing in the New Testament of planting Christian churches in these parts of the Peloponnesus.

^h *Another man's province, &c.*] The apostle did indeed go to places *already*

other places that lay in our way: Not like those whom I have had so much reason to complain of, *boasting unmeasurably*, or in things beyond my proper measure, not intruding into churches planted by the labours of others, where we have no natural and proper call; but having an agreeable hope, [*that*] when your faith is increased, as we trust it will abundantly be, even by the experience of what has lately happened, we shall, according to our rule, and the constant maxim we lay down to ourselves, be magnified by you, so as to abound yet more, that is, shall by your countenance and assistance be enabled to keep on our courses beyond your country into Arcadia and Lacedæmon, or whithersoever else Providence may lead us. For this is greatly in our hearts, if God shall smile upon our purposes, to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you,[§] [and] not to boast in another man's province^h or rule, in things made ready to our hand; as some who are very solicitous about their own ease affect to do, and then pride themselves in sowing the ground which others have cleared. But after all, he that boasteth, whether it be of planting or watering churches, let him boast not in himself; but in the power and assistance of the Lord alone, let every minister remember it is to Christ that he owes all his ability for his work, and all his success in it. For not he that commendeth himself with the greatest confidence, and in the most florid manner, is truly and justly approved; but he whom the Lord commendeth by the gifts of his Spirit, and by a blessing on his ministry. Let those therefore who are so ready to applaud themselves and each

SECT.
XVI.

2 Cor.
x. 15.

converted, to confirm and establish his brethren in the faith; but this was chiefly where he had himself planted churches, though he might take some others in his way; which it would have been affectation and disrespect, rather than modesty, to have avoided. But he did not boast in churches thus visited as if he were the founder of them, as his opposers probably did, pouring contempt on St. Paul's labours, as if they were hardly to be called Christian churches which he had left, as they pretended, in so unformed and unfinished a state.

SECT. other, think of this, and learn to be more sol-
 XVI. citous than they are about approving their
 fidelity to their great Master, whether they be
 2 Cor. more or less regarded by their fellow-servants.
 x. 18.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 1. MAY the meekness and gentleness of Christ ever be remem-
 bered by all his servants, and especially by his ministers, to
 whom, both under their public and private characters, it will be
 of so great importance to imitate it. Their calling is indeed
 high and holy; let their behaviour in it be so much the more
 3 humble. And let it be their great care, that while they walk in
 the flesh they do not war after it. Still, though disarmed of
 that miraculous power with which the apostles were endowed,
 4 are the weapons of their warfare mighty. They have the scrip-
 ture magazine ever at hand, from whence they may be furnish-
 ed with them; and may humbly hope that the Spirit of God
 will render them effectual to the pulling down strong holds, and
 5 abasing every proud imagination which exalteth itself against
 the obedience of God. May every thought of their own hearts
 be in the first place thus subdued, and brought into a sweet and
 willing captivity! So shall these their captives, thus conquer-
 ed, prove as so many faithful soldiers to fight for him, against
 whom they once were foolishly rebelling. And may they suc-
 ceed in this holy war, till the empire of our Divine Master be-
 come universal, and the happiness of mankind universal with it!

To promote this, let us pray that ministers may always re-
 member, that whatever authority they have given them, is for
 7—11 edification and not for destruction; and may learn from that
 moderation with which the apostle used his miraculous powers,
 in how gentle and candid a manner they should behave them-
 selves in their far inferior stations, never making their pre-emi-
 nence in the church the instrument of their own resentment, or
 of any other sinful or selfish passion; but ever solicitous to sub-
 serve the interest of our great Lord in all, and desirous to keep
 up their own character and influence chiefly for his sake.

12—16 May they in no instance boast beyond their proper measure;
 and while they are ready, like St. Paul, to meet all the most la-
 borious scenes of serving, let them glory not in themselves, but
 in the Lord. This is a lesson we are all to learn. And what-
 ever our stations in life are, let us resolutely and constantly
 17, 18 guard against that self-flattery by which we may be ready to
 commend ourselves, in instances in which we may be least ap-
 proved by him whose favour alone is worthy of our ambition,
 and by whose judgment, in the day of final account, we must
 stand or fall.

SECT. XVII.

The apostle farther vindicates himself from the perverse insinuations of them that opposed him at Corinth; particularly on the head of his having declined to receive a contribution from this church for his maintenance. 2 Cor. xi. 1—15.

2 COR. XI. 1.

WOULD to God you could bear with me a little in my folly, and indeed bear with me.

2 CORINTHIANS XI. 1.

SECT. XVII.

2 Cor. xi. 1.

2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

3 But I fear lest by any means, as the

I WOULD advise every man, as I have hinted, to be sparing in his own commendation, and to study above all to approve himself to Christ; and yet, in present circumstances, *I wish you would bear with a little of [my] folly*, that you would permit a little of that boasting which I know generally to be foolish; and indeed I must entreat you to *bear with me* in what may look this way, considering the manner in which I am urged to it, and brought under an unwilling necessity. *For I am jealous over you with* what I trust I may call a godly jealousy, and feel the warmest and most zealous desires that *I may present [you as] a chaste virgin to Christ;*^a *for I have* by successfully preaching the gospel to you, and bringing you into the engagements of the Christian covenant, in effect *espoused you to one husband,*^b even to him, under the character of his servant and ambassador, I have led you into a holy contract with him, which hath been mutually sealed. I am therefore exceedingly concerned that you may maintain a pure and loyal heart to him who has condescended to take you into so dear and intimate a relation.

And I am the more solicitous about this, as I know what insinuating enemies are endeavouring to corrupt you: *for I fear lest by any means, as in the first seduction and ruin of mankind,*

^a That I may present you, &c.] This is much illustrated by recollection, that there was an officer among the Greeks, whose business it was to educate and form young women, especially those of rank and figure, designed for marriage, and then to present them to those who were to be their husbands; and if this officer permitted them, through negligence, to be corrupted between the es-

pousals and consummation of the marriage, great blame would naturally fall upon him.

^b For I have espoused you.] This clause, ἡμεσάμεν γὰρ ὑμᾶς ἐνὶ ἀνδρὶ, may be considered as a parenthesis; and therefore in the paraphrase I have transposed it, that the construction may appear; ζήλω ὑμᾶς παραστήσαι, I am jealous, &c.—that I may present you, &c.

SECT. *the serpent deceived Eve,^c our common mother, serpent beguiled Eve*
 XVII. *by his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted through his subtlety,*
 2 Cor. *from that simplicity which should always be in so your minds should*
 xi. 3. *us towards Christ,^d and which the adulterous be corrupted from*
mixtures which some are endeavouring to introduce among you would greatly injure. the simplicity that
is in Christ.

- 4 *For if he that cometh among you with such extraordinary pretences, preach another Jesus as a Saviour, whom we have not preached; if he can point out another Christ who shall equally deserve your attention and regard; or [if] ye receive by his preaching another spirit, which ye have not yet received, which can bestow upon you gifts superior to those which we have imparted; or another gospel which ye have not accepted, the tidings of which shall be equally happy, evident, and important, ye might well bear with [him,] and there would be some excuse for your conduct; but how far this is from being or so much as seeming to be the case, I need*
 4 For if he that cometh, preached another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit which ye have not received, or another gospel which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.
- 5 *not say at large. Nor will you, I am sure, maintain any such thing; for I reckon upon most certain knowledge, that I was so far from being inferior in my discourses or miracles to these your favourite teachers, that I did not in any respect fall short of the greatest of the apostles; but gave you as evident and convincing proofs of a Divine mission as any church has ever received from any one of them. For if [I am]*
 5 For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.
- 6 *unskilful in speech, using plain and unpolished language like that of a man of the most ordinary education; ^e nevertheless [I am] not so in*
 6 But though I be rude in speech, yet

^c *Lest as the serpent deceived Eve, &c.] From the instance to which this is applied, viz. that of the false apostles, whose subtlety did not consist so much in crafty arguments as in false appearances, by which they put on the outward forms of the apostles of Christ; Mr. Rymer infers, (especially comparing verse 14,) that the subtlety of Satan, when he deceived Eve, consisted in putting on the appearance of an angel of light, or pretending to be one of the Seraphims that attended on the Shechinah. (Rymer on Rev. p. 79.) But I think that if it had been ever so expressly said by Moses, that the deception lay, as it very probably might, in pretending to have received the faculty*

of reason and speech, though a brute, by eating the fruit he proposed to her, it might be said in the general, that the false apostles deceived their followers, as Satan deceived Eve, that is, by false pretences and insinuations.

^d *Simplicity towards Christ: ἀπλοῦς τῆς εἰς Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.] This implies an entire undivided devotedness to Christ, as the great husband Christians should desire to please, and from whom they are to receive law; and is with peculiar propriety opposed to that mixture of Judaism which some were endeavouring to bring in among the Corinthians.*

^e *Unskilful in speech.] ἰδιώτης properly signifies a private man, one that can speak*

not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things.

knowledge of the gospel of Christ, and the Divine dispensations which were introductory to it. *But in every respect we have been manifest to you in all things*, every one of you has had a proof of this, as you received the gospel from me, and therefore ought not to question my abilities, nor to prefer another in opposition to me.

SECT.
XVII.
2 Cor.
xi. 6.

7 Have I committed an offence in abasing myself, that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

Nothing can be more ungenerous and unreasonable than to insinuate that I have renounced my claim to being an apostle, by declining that maintenance which my brethren generally think it reasonable to take from the people among whom they labour, and which while employed for them they may indeed reasonably expect. *Have I then committed an offence, in humbling myself to the daily cares and toils of a tent-maker, that you may more effectually be exalted to the dignity of those who know and believe in Christ?* Is this, after all, the crime, *that I have preached the gospel of God to you at free cost?*

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.

I may almost, in this sense, be said to *have robbed other churches*; so freely have I received from them, at least *taken wages*, as it were, [*of them,*] *for waiting upon you*; for indeed I received a kind of stipend from them while I abode at Corinth. (Phil. iv. 15.) *And when I was in want while present with you, I was chargeable to no one man^f of your society*, when incapable of maintaining myself, as before: *for what was deficient to me in this respect, the Christian brethren who came from Macedonia supplied: (Phil. iv. 10.) and in all things I have kept, and, so long as God shall enable me, I will keep myself from being burdensome to you.*

9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.

no better than the generality of his neighbours, being unformed by the rules of eloquence. And this is consistent with that great natural pathos which we find in the apostle's writings; so that there is no need of recurring, as Dr. Whitby here does, to the supposed impediment in his speech, which, allowing it ever so certain a fact, could not properly be expressed by this phrase. The good Archbishop of Cambray hath a very pertinent observation on this expression, in his excellent Dialogues of Eloquence, (p. 136.) viz. that this might well be the case, though St. Paul

shared so largely in the gift of tongues; as when he was at Tarsus, he probably learnt a corrupt kind of Greek, spoken by the inhabitants of this place; for we have reason to believe, that as for any of the languages which the apostles had learnt in a natural way, the Spirit left them to speak as before.

^f Chargeable to no man: *οὐ κατέναρξεν οὐδενὸς.*] Beza would render it, *I was not idle at any man's expense*. The word *ναρξεν* implies a benumbed inactive state, a kind of torpor, to which no man seems to be less obnoxious than St. Paul.

SECT. And this in some measure I value myself upon;
 XVII. so that *as the truth of Christ is in me, this*
 ——— *boast shall not be violated, nor this rule broke in*
 2 Cor. upon *with respect to me, at Corinth, or in all*
 xi, 10. *the regions of Achaia.*

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

11 And *why* is it that I insist upon this? Is it *because I love you not*, and therefore am unwilling to be under any obligation to you? *God knows* the contrary, that you have a large share in my tenderest affections and cares; yea, that it was my desire of serving you more effectually, that subjected me to these mortifications and self-denials; for such they undoubtedly were.

11 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.

12 *But what I do* in this respect, *I will* continue to do, that *I may cut off occasion from them who greatly desire an occasion to reflect upon me, that in [the thing of] which they are so ready to boast, they may be found even as we.*⁵ I would teach them by my example, instead of boasting, that they have such an influence over you, as procures them a plentiful and perhaps splendid maintenance, that they rather emulate my disinterested conduct, and subsist on their own labours. But I know they have no inward prin-

12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

13 ciple to bear them through such hardships. *For such*, whatever they pretend, *[are] false apostles*, destitute of that Divine mission which animates our spirits to do, or to bear, whatever we meet in the course of our duty; and indeed they are *deceitful workers*, whatever pains they may seem to take in their employment; *transforming themselves* artfully into the appearance of *apostles of Christ* by counterfeit forms, which they may put on for a while, but which they can

13 For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14 with no consistency long support. *And [it is] no wonder* they assume them for a time; *for Satan himself*, in subordination to whom they act, can put on such deceitful appearances, and wear upon occasion such a mask of sanctity and religion in his attempts, that he *is*, as it were, *transformed into an angel of light*, and one would imagine his suggestions to be of a celestial and

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

⁵ *They might be found, &c.]* The Jews had a maxim among them, "that it was better for their wise men to skin beasts for a living, than to ask a maintenance from the generosity of those

"whom they taught." But it plainly appears, that whatever the false apostles might boast upon this head, there was no foundation for it. Compare verse 20, and 1 Cor. ix. 12.

15 Therefore it is no great thing, if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. Divine original. Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also, under his influence, be transformed as ministers of righteousness; whose end nevertheless shall be, not according to their specious pretences, but according to their works; for they will find that God, upon whose judgment their final state depends, is not to be imposed upon by any of their artifices. SECT. XVII. 2 Cor. xi. 15.

IMPROVEMENT.

How adorable is the condescension of the blessed Jesus, who, Ver. 2. amidst all the exalted glories of his heavenly kingdom, is so graciously uniting souls to himself; espousing them in bonds of everlasting love, that they may be for ever near him, and receive the most endearing communications of his favour. Much should we all be concerned that we may have the honour and blessings of such an alliance; that being by profession solemnly espoused to him, we may in the day of the marriage of the Lamb be presented chaste and spotless. How vigilant should they be who are intrusted by him to treat with souls about these espousals! How solicitous that they may succeed, and may so present them to Christ!

Still is that crafty serpent, whose malignant breath so soon tainted our common mother and all our happiness by his subtlety, labouring to corrupt our minds from the simplicity of true Christianity. Let us be incessantly watchful against the artful deceiver, remembering that his works and designs of darkness may sometimes be veiled as under the robes of an angel of light, and his ministers transformed as ministers of righteousness. Be therefore sober and vigilant, since your adversary the devil adds the wiliness of the old serpent to the rage and cruelty of the roaring lion, and by both subserves his purposes of betraying or devouring the souls of men. 14, 15

Let us therefore with a godly jealousy be jealous over each other, and especially over ourselves; and after the example of the apostle, be peculiarly so when we are compelled to say any thing to our own advantage. Let us endeavour to arm ourselves against every surrounding danger, by a growing regard to the writings of this excellent man, who, though rude in speech, was so far from being in any degree deficient in Christian knowledge, that he was not behind the very chief of the apostles. There are those that preach another gospel: but can they point out another Jesus, another all-sufficient Saviour? Can they direct us to another Spirit? Let us hold fast the doctrine we learn from his faithful pen: let us follow the exhortations we receive from his experienced heart, and be ever ready to imitate him in the resolute self-denial which he exercised, and that glorious superiority

SECT. to every other interest which he always showed, where the in-
 XVII. terests of Christ and of souls were concerned. So shall we cut
 off occasion from them that seek occasion against us, and se-
 Ver. 12. cure a far greater happiness, in the conscious reflection of our
 own minds, as well as the expectation of a future reward, than
 the greatest abundance of this world could have given us, or
 any present advantage to which we could have sacrificed the
 views of conscience and honour.

SECT. XVIII.

Farther to assert his right as an apostle, St. Paul commemorates his labours and sufferings in the cause of Christ ; yet in such a manner as plainly to show how disagreeable it was to him, so much as to seem to applaud himself on the most necessary occasion. 2 Cor. xi. 16, to the end.

2 CORINTHIANS XI. 16.

SECT. **I** HAVE said some things which may seem
 XVIII. more to the advantage of my character, than
 a man would wish any thing which comes
 2 Cor. from his own lips or pen should appear. But
 xi. 16. again I must say, *Let no man think me to be so foolish in this boasting, as to take any pleasure in commending myself. Let the provocation I have received be considered; let the necessity of the circumstance, and the importance of my character, be duly weighed; and you will surely excuse it. But if it must be otherwise censured, I will run the risk, and beseech you, if you think me foolish in it, as foolish, however, to receive and bear with me as well as others, that I may in my turn at least boast some small matter.*

2 COR. XI. 16.
I SAY again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

17 *What I speak on this head, I speak not after the Lord, not by any immediate direction or inspiration from Christ; nor is it so evidently in his Spirit as I could wish, or so apparently conformable to that example of modesty and humility which he hath set us: but I speak it, as it were, foolishly in this confidence of boasting;*^a on which

17 That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly in this confidence of boasting.

^a *Foolishly in this confidence of boasting.*] It seems indeed not very just and natural to interpret this as spoken by immediate suggestion; yet it being in present circumstances very proper the apostle should speak thus, the Holy Spirit might by a general, though unperceived, influ-

ence, lead him into this track of thought and expression; and though such apologies might seem beneath the dignity of an apostle's character, yet that very condescension is an excellent and most useful example of humility to all Christians, and especially to ministers.

18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

20 For ye suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been

account I return to this subject again with some sensible regret. Yet lest my silence should be attended with still worse consequences, I think myself obliged, though with strong reluctance, to say, *seeing many boast according to the flesh*, in circumcision and Jewish extraction, *I also will boast* as well as they; and truly were I disposed to do it on these topics, you well know that no man could say more than I.

And by the way, you may well bear with foolish people, since you [yourselves] are so wondrous wise, and in that abundant wisdom can cherish that arrogant temper in others, and second it with your high applause. Nay, indeed you go farther than that, and not only endure to hear your admired teachers make very indecent encomiums upon themselves, but tamely submit to them while they invade your property, and tyrannize over you in a most arbitrary and scandalous manner. For by what I can learn of the temper of some among you in that respect, and of your fond infatuation in their favour, it seems that you bear it patiently if a man enslave you, and even trample upon your liberty, if he devour [you] by his exorbitant demands, if he take and seize [on your possessions,] if he exalt himself as if he were your supreme and absolute sovereign, if his mad passion were to transport him even to blows, and he were to smite you on the face,^b your fondness for him would prevent your calling him to a just account, and you would find some way of excusing or accommodating the affair, rather than come to a breach with him.

Do I speak this by way of dishonour, from an envious desire to derogate from my superiors, and so bring them down to my own level; as if we ourselves were weak in comparison with them, and therefore have not the courage to attempt such freedoms as they take? There can surely be no reason to suspect that; for be

SECT.
XVIII.
2 Cor.
xi. 18.

^b Smite you on the face.] As one can hardly imagine that the false apostles would run all these lengths, (though Dr. Whitby well observes, that the high conceit which the Jews had of their superiority over the Gentiles might lead them to great insolence of behaviour,) I chose to paraphrase the words in such a latitude as might waive the severity of the most literal interpretation.

SECT. they ever so puffed up with their external pri-
 XVIII. vileges, I would have them to know, that *in*
 ————— *whatever any one else may be confident in these*
 2 Cor. respects, though *I speak it indeed in folly, I*
 xi. 21. *also am confident, and on their own terms could*

22 match or even exceed them. *Are they, for in-*
stance, Hebrews by language, capable of con-
sulting the scriptures in the original, with all
the advantage which a familiar acquaintance
with that tongue from their childhood can give
them? so [am] I. Are they Israelites by birth,
not descended from Esau or any other branch
of the family but that on which the blessing
was entailed? so [am] I likewise. Are they of
the seed of Abraham, both by the father's and
mother's side, not proselytes or of mingled de-
scend? so [am] I; and can trace up as fair and
clear a genealogy, through the tribe of Benja-

23 min, to the father of the faithful. Or if they
 would boast in a manner more peculiarly refer-
 ring to the gospel; *are they ministers of Christ?*
I may seem to speak foolishly in this boasting
manner, which is so unnatural to me; I cannot
forbear repeated apologies for it; but I will ven-
ture to say here, that I [am] more so than they:
so far more than an ordinary minister, that I
am a chosen apostle, dignified and distinguish-
ed from many of my brethren by more eminent
services; more abundant in labours now for a long
series of years; exceeding them in the frequent
stripes I have received on account of my singu-
lar zeal; more abundant in imprisonments, cheer-
fully resigning my liberty for the sake of Christ
and his gospel; and often in deaths, which are
continually surrounding me in the most hor-
rible forms, but which, by Divine grace, I have
learnt to meet and to vanquish in all their ter-
rors, animated by love to my Divine Leader.

24 I certainly have endured more blows than
 any of them in his cause; for *of the Jews I*
have five times received, in their synagogues and
before their courts of judgment, forty [stripes]
save one, according to the precautions which
they use that they may not transgress the pre-
 25 cept of their law, which limits them to that
 number. (Deut. xxv. 3.) *And thrice was I*
beaten with rods by the Roman lictors or

weak: howbeit,
 whereinsoever any
 is bold, (I speak
 foolishly,) I am bold
 also.

22 Are they He-
 brews? so am I: are
 they Israelites? so
 am I: are they the
 seed of Abraham? so
 am I.

23 Are they minis-
 ters of Christ? (I
 speak as a fool,) I am
 more; in labours
 more abundant, in
 stripes above mea-
 sure, in prisons more
 frequent, in deaths
 oft.

24 Of the Jews five
 times received I for-
 ty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I
 beaten with rods,

once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep.

at the command of their superior magistrates. I have reason to say I have been in greater danger of death than any of them; for *once at Lystra I was stoned*, and left for dead in the place; nor had I been recovered but by miracle. (Acts xiv. 19.) *Thrice I have been shipwrecked*,^c and escaped with the utmost difficulty from the rage of the waves; at one of which times I was reduced to such extremity, that *I passed a day and a night in the deep*,^d floating on the remainder of the wreck, and just on the point of being washed away and sunk every moment. On the whole, I have been *in journeys often*, where I have not only been exposed to fatigues, but to great hazard from wild beasts, as well as from unreasonable and wicked men. I have also been *in frequent dangers from the depths and rapidity of several rivers*^e which I have been obliged to pass; I have also been *in danger from the assaults of robbers*, who have lain in wait for me with a design to plunder and murder me. I have often been *in dangers from [my own] countrymen the Jews*; who forgetting the mutual ties of relation by blood, birth, and religion, have attempted my life with insatiable rage, cruelly hunting me from place to place, as if I had been some beast of prey: *in dangers from the heathen*, who have often been stirred up by the Jews, as well as offended by the testimony I have been obliged to bear against their idolatries. Every place through which I have passed has indeed been a scene of perils, and often of great extremities; so that I have been *in dangers in the city of Jerusalem and other cities; in dangers in*

SECT.
XVIII.

2 Cor.
xi. 25.

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in

^c *Thrice have I been shipwrecked.*] The wreck at Malta happened long after, and therefore must at least have been the fourth; and had the inhabitants known it to be so, they would have been confirmed in their suspicions of his being a very bad man; but this remarkably shows us a series of what the world calls misfortunes from the hand of Providence, may befall the best and worthiest of mankind.

^d *Passed a day and a night in the deep.*] Νυχθημερον (rendered a day and a night),

signifies a natural day, including the hours of light and darkness. Βυθῶ, the word here used, and rendered *in the deep*, was indeed the name of a deep dungeon at Cyzicum in the Propontis; and Dr. Hammond conjectures that St. Paul was cast into it as he passed from Troas to that city; but I think the other interpretation most easy and natural.

^e *In dangers from rivers.*] To render ποταμων waters, as we do, is confounding these hazards with those he endured in the sea, in a very improper manner.

SECT. *the wilderness, while laboriously traversing the wilderness, in per-*
 XVIII. *many dreary and inhospitable deserts in pur-* *ils in the sea, in pe-*
 ——— *suit of my apostolical work: in dangers of the* *ils among false bre-*
 2 Cor. *sea, where I have encountered many a storm,* *thren.*
 xi. 26.

besides those in which, as I observed before, I suffered shipwreck, and where I have sometimes been beset by pirates: And though it be shameful to say it, yet it is most certainly true, that I have frequently been *in very formidable dangers among false brethren,*^f who, amidst all the most specious pretensions of love and affection, have been secretly watching for opportunities to expose, and, if possible, to destroy me; or at least to ruin my usefulness, still dearer to me than my life.

27 I have been for a long series of years engaged *in strenuous labour and fatiguing toil,*^g almost incessant; so that the end of one has presently been the beginning of another: I have been, *in watchings, often* obliged to add the fatigues of the night to those of the day, either in extraordinary devotion, which hath kept mine eyes waking while others have slept; or in preaching to those who have pressed in upon me to hear the gospel as privately as possible; or by corresponding with Christian churches who needed my advice, by which I have lost the rest of many nights in my long journeys, or *in other circumstances into which Providence hath called me. I have often known what hunger and thirst mean, have been in fastings often,* not having had even the necessities of life at hand. And at the same time I have frequently been exposed to the severity of rigorous seasons, *in cold and even nakedness too;*^h not having convenient clothing to cover me, or comfortable habitation to repose myself in. All this, *beside* foreign affairs, that daily combination that

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28 Besides those

^f *False brethren.*] Perhaps he mentions these last, as apprehending peculiar danger from their efforts among the Corinthians.

^g *In labour and toil.*] The latter of the words here used, *μοχθῶ*, is more expressive than the former, *κοπῶ*. It signifies not only strenuous labour, but such as proceeds to a degree of fatigue.

^h *Cold and nakedness.*] What an idea

does this give us of the apostle's fidelity and zeal! It is to die warm in a good and noble cause. How hard was it for a man of a genteel and liberal education, as St. Paul was, to bear such rigours, and to wander about like a vagabond, hungry and almost naked, yet coming into the presence of persons of high life, and speaking in large and various assemblies on matters of the utmost importance!

things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

20 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

does, as it were, make up an assembly, *the care of all the churches* abroad, whose concerns are *rushing in upon me every day*,ⁱ with such impetuosity, that they sometimes are ready not only to confound, but to overbear me. Nor am I concerned only for whole communities, but for particular persons too, as soon as their circumstances are known to me; so that I may say, *Who is weak, and I am not weak* too? Like a tenderly compassionate friend, I feel my own spirits ready to fail, when I see my brethren sink around me. *Who is offended*, so as to be led into sin by the rashness and uncharitableness of others, *and I am not*, as it were, *fired* with grief and indignation to see such dishonour brought upon religion, and with zeal, if possible, to redress the grievance?^k

SECT. XVIII.
2 Cor. xi. 28.

30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

If it is necessary to boast, and I am heartily sorry that it is, *I will*, however, *boast* of those things which relate to my infirmities; as I know this tenderness of temper, that so often weeps and trembles, and glows with such strong emotions, on what some may think trivial occasions, will be esteemed by them; yet of these only, and of those sufferings which show the weakness of human nature, and my need of support from Christ; of these alone have I hitherto presumed to speak: nor do I feign or aggravate any thing. Far from that, *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, even he, the Eternal Majesty of heaven and earth, *who is ever blessed, knoweth that I do not lie*, or in any degree transgress the strictest boundaries of truth.

31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

30
31

32 In Damascus

And I cannot forbear adding one circumstance more, to illustrate the early dangers to which I was exposed as soon as I engaged in the Christian cause, and the remarkable interposition of

ⁱ *Rushing in upon me every day.*] The original phrase is very emphatical, *ἡ ἐπιτοῦσαίς μου ἡ κατ' ἡμέραν*. *Ἐπιτοῦσαίς* properly signifies a tumult or crowd of people rising up against a man at once, and ready to bear him down. This the version I have given hints at better than our own, which neither expresses number nor violence. But there is still an imperfection which I endeavoured, as well as I could, to supply by the paraphrase.

Mr. Saurin would render it, *what besieges me daily*. Saurin's Sermon. Vol. X. p. 163. Edit. 1749.

^k *Who is offended, and I am not fired?*] So *πυρραί* properly signifies. It may perhaps, in this connexion, allude to the sudden hurry of spirits into which a man is put by the dangerous fall of a person he tenderly loves, especially when occasioned by the carelessness and folly of another.

SECT. Providence in my favour, which I would never forget. I mean, that when I was in *Damascus*¹ about three years after my conversion, the governor, or ethnarch, under King Aretas, set a guard at every gate of the city of the *Damascenes*, being determined, if possible, to seize me; in compliance with the solicitations of the Jews, who endeavoured by any means to make me odious to the government, and to crush my usefulness in the bud, if not immediately to destroy my life itself. And I was let down, through a window, in a basket, from a house which stood by the wall of the city, and happily escaped from his hands: and by the continued care of the same Providence remain unto this day, and see the many contrivances of my enemies for my destruction turned into disappointment and shame.

the governor under Aretas the King, kept the city of the *Damascenes* with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 16, 18. SURELY we have reason to be thankful, in some degree, for that providential permission to which it was owing that this blessed apostle was brought under the unwilling necessity of boasting, to which his modesty submits with such genuine and becoming regret: we had otherwise lost some very valuable fragments of sacred history, which it becomes us to gather up with respect. We are indeed elsewhere informed concerning several of his labours, stripes, and imprisonments; but how frequent and above measure they were, we had never known, if he had not been urged thus to plead them with the Corinthians, and so to represent them to us. What a life was St. Paul's amidst so many injuries and hardships! Land and sea, every country, every city, almost every society of men, seemed to be in a combination against him, to make his life wretched; and amidst all the rigours and severities of toils and watchings, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, he felt and particularly complained of the treatment he received from false brethren. Yet thus surrounded, and as we should from the detail be ready to say, thus overwhelmed with so many and so various miseries, he was yet happy in the favour of God, in the presence of Christ: unspeakably happy in the cheerful views of approaching glory, and in all that abundant usefulness with which a gracious God was pleased to honour him. Whilst his benevolent heart

¹ *In Damascus, &c.*] This probably three years in Arabia. Compare Acts happened, not when he was first converted, but when he had preached about ix. 23—26, with Gal. i. 16—18.

was pained, it was also comforted; and with the care of all the churches pressing upon him, and with all that he felt from particular persons, still was his voice in tune for praise; and he hardly ever begins an epistle without such a burst of it in some of his first lines, as looks like one of the songs of heaven. O glorious effect of real Christianity, which every inferior minister, yea, and every private Christian, to this day feels, in proportion to the degree in which his character resembles that of this holy champion of our Divine faith!

But O! how unlike his hath been the character of many who have borne themselves highest on their pretended claims to the most extraordinary powers, by a succession from him and his brethren! What tyrannical insults! what exorbitant oppressions! What base methods to enslave the conscience, the properties, and the persons of men, whom they should have respected and loved as their brethren, whom they should have cherished even as their children! So that one would imagine they had taken the picture which St. Paul here draws of the false apostles, as a model of their own conduct; while they have perhaps denied the title of ministers of Christ to those who have much more resembled the dispositions and circumstances of this his most faithful ambassador. Oh that this might only be the infamy of the Popish clergy, with whose cruel and usurping practices such censures may seem best to suit! Or rather would to God it were no longer even theirs. May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed for ever more, pour out a better spirit upon all who profess themselves the servants of his Son! That they whose business it is to call others to Christ, may themselves first come, and learn of him, who is meek and lowly of heart; whose yoke is so easy and his burden so light, that it is astonishing that any who have themselves felt it, should ever think of binding on others burdens heavy and hard to be borne.

SECT. XIX.

The apostle goes on with great plainness and freedom, yet at the same time with great modesty, to give an account of some extraordinary revelations which he had received from God, and of those experiences which taught him to glory even in his infirmities. 2 Cor. xii. 1—10.

2 COR. XII. 1.

2 CORINTHIANS XII. 1.

IT is not expedient I HAVE spoken with some freedom in the preceding discourse of my labours and sufferings in the Christian cause; but whatever they have been, *I well know that it is not expedient*

SECT. XIX.

2 Cor. xii. 1.

SECT. XIX. *for me to boast, nor would I by any means indulge myself in such a practice; nevertheless,*^a with the precautions I have already advanced, and with those good purposes continually in view, that have led me so far out of my common manner of speaking, *I will now come to say something of those visions and revelations of the Lord* with which his unworthy servant has, by his astonishing grace and condescension, been favoured. I hardly indeed know how to mention a name so undeserving as my own in this connexion; but I will venture in the general to say, that *I well knew a certain man in Christ,*^b one who esteems it his highest honour to belong to such a Master; who, though he hath hitherto thought proper to conceal it, was remarkably indulged in this respect, *above fourteen years ago.* Whether he was then *in the body*, during that extraordinary ecstasy, *I know not; or for a time taken out of the body*, so that only the principle of animal life remained in it, *I know not.*^c God only knows how that was; nor is it of any importance too curiously to search into such a circumstance. He had at least no consciousness of any thing that passed about him at that time, and all his sensations were as entirely ceased as if his union with the body had been broken.

2 Cor.
xii. 1.

for me, doubtless, to glory: I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of the body I cannot tell: God know-

^a *Nevertheless.*] The apostle's speaking of his visions and revelations, which indeed did him the highest honour, could not be a proof that he was determined not to *boast*. It is evident, therefore, that *γὰρ* cannot have its usual signification, and be rendered *for*. Our translators take it for a mere *expletive*, and therefore omit it. I have ventured to render it *nevertheless*, as it is certain it has often various significations, and must have this signification here, if it express any thing. The force of *but* in this connexion would be the same with *nevertheless*.

^b *A certain man in Christ.*] He must undoubtedly mean himself, or the whole article had been quite foreign to his purpose. It appears from hence that the apostle had concealed this extraordinary event fourteen years; and if this epistle was written about the year 58, as we suppose it was, this vision must have fallen out in the year 44, which was so long after his conversion, as to prove it

quite different from the *trance* mentioned Acts ix. 9, with which some have confounded it. Dr. Benson thinks this glorious representation was made to him while he was praying in the temple, in that journey, Acts xi. 30, chap. xxii. 17, and intended to encourage him against the difficulties he was to encounter in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. Bens. Prop. Vol. II. p. 7. See Vol. III. sect. 50, note ^a.

^c *Whether in the body, &c.*] As St. Paul must know his body was not actually dead during this *trance*, but that the animal motion of his *heart and lungs* continued, it would lead one to imagine that he really apprehended the principle of *animal* life to be something *distinct* from the *rational* soul, which he calls *himself*. It appears at least that he lost all consciousness of any thing about him at that time; and what the presence of an *immaterial* soul in a body can be, distinct from the capacity of perceiving by it and acting upon it, I am yet to learn.

eth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven:

3 And I knew such a man (whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth:)

4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

5 Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

Such an one, I say, I did most intimately know, SECT. XIX. *who was snatched up even into the third heaven,* the seat of the Divine glory, and the place where Christ dwelleth at the Father's right hand, having all the celestial principalities and powers in humble subjection to him. *Yea, I say, I 3 even knew such a man, whether in the body or out of the body,* I now say not, because *I know not: God knoweth;* and let him have the glory of supporting his life in so extraordinary a circumstance, whichever might be the case. And *4 I know, that having been thus entertained with these visions of the third heavens, on which good men are to enter after the resurrection, lest he should be impatient under the delay of his part of the glory there, he was also caught up into paradise,^d that garden of God which is the seat of happy spirits in the intermediate state, and during their separation from the body; where he had the pleasure of an interview with many of the pious dead, and heard among them unutterable words, expressive of their sublime ideas, which he was there taught to understand. But the language was such as it is not lawful or possible^e for man to utter; we have no terms of speech fit to express such conceptions, nor would it be consistent with the schemes of Providence, which require that we should be conducted by faith, rather than by sight, to suffer such circumstances as these to be revealed to the inhabitants of mortal flesh. In such an 5 one, therefore, whoever he be, I will venture to boast, so far as to say, that he received a peculiar honour from our great Lord, and for the time was made, as it were, another man by it. But in myself I will not boast, unless it be in my in-*

^d Also caught up into paradise.] I have followed Bishop Bull's interpretation of these words, in the distinction he makes between the *third heavens* and *paradise*. See his Works, vol. I. serm. 3. p. 89. To which Dr. Whitby agrees, who also supposes this not merely a vision, as I think it was, but a *reality*; which if St. Paul had thought it, he must surely have concluded that he was not then *in the body*.

^e Lawful or possible.] I think, with Witsius, that *εγω* may comprehend both. —Different divines have conjectured

very differently concerning these things; of which I suppose they knew nothing. But Mr. Fleming's conjecture, that he was instructed in the doctrine of the *first resurrection*, and Mr. Whiston's, that he was instructed in the grand secrets contained in the *apostolical constitutions* revealed to the *eleven* in the chamber on Sion, and not to be publicly disclosed till many ages after, may serve as specimens of the rest.—Whist. Prim. Christianity, vol. III. p. 32.

SECT. *firmities*, in those things which carry the marks
 XIX. of weakness, which yet in a certain connexion
 will appear honourable too. *For if I should*
 2 Cor. *resolve to boast a little on the occasion I have*
 xii. 6. *mentioned, I shall not upon the whole be foolish;*
 though it be generally so, considering the particular circumstances in which I am: *for I speak*
nothing but the strictest truth, how strange soever it may seem. *But I forbear to insist largely*
upon it, lest any one should esteem me above what
he sees to be in me, or, having a fair opportunity
of learning my true character, hears of me; for
 instead of arrogating to myself any undeserved
 regards, I would rather decline them, and should
 be secretly grieved and ashamed if they were
 paid to me.

7 I have indeed had my peculiar privileges: but
 alas, I have my infirmities, and my temptations
 too. *And lest I should be too much elevated with*
the abundance of those extraordinary revelations
of which I have been speaking, there was given
me, that is, it pleased God to appoint to me, an
affliction, which was so painful, that it was like
a pointed thorn in the flesh,^f continually piercing
 and wounding me: and this in such circumstances,
 that one would think it had been intended on purpose
that the messenger and apostle of Satan, the false teachers
 whom I have been describing (chap. xi. 13—15,) under that
 character, *might from thence take occasion to*
buffet and upbraid me; that I, being subject to
 such disorders, though naturally resulting from
 the manner in which my nerves were impressed
 by this ecstasy, *might not be excessively exalted;*

6 For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

^f *A thorn in the flesh.*] How much this *thorn* in St. Paul's *flesh* has perplexed and disquieted commentators, they who have conversed much with them know but too well. Many have understood it of *bodily pains*; and Mr. Baxter, being himself subject to a *nephritic* disorder, supposes it might be the *stone* or *gravel*. The conjectures of some of the ancients are much grosser. I rather acquiesce in that interpretation by Dr. Whitby (which the author of *Miscel. Sacra* has adopted, and taken pains to illustrate, *Essay* iii. p. 22—24:) That the view he had of celestial glories, af-

fected the system of his *nerves* in such a manner as to occasion some *paralytic* symptoms, and particularly a *stammering* in his speech, and perhaps some ridiculous *distortion* in his countenance, referred to elsewhere in the phrase of the *infirmity in his flesh*. See Gal. iv. 13, 14. 1 Cor. ii. 5. Compare Dan. viii. 27. As this might threaten both his acceptance and usefulness, it is no wonder he was so importunate for its being removed; yet being the attendant and effect of so great a favour, he might with peculiar propriety speak of *glorying* in it.

but might bear away, like Jacob, when he had been so successfully wrestling with the angel, an infirmity in my animal frame, from which ungenerous and cruel enemies might profanely take an occasion to insult me. (Gen. xxxii. 25.)

SECT.

XIX.

2 Cor.
xii. 7.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

This was indeed at first so very grievous and mortifying to me, and seemed to have so unhappy an aspect upon my acceptance and usefulness as a preacher of the gospel, that I was very importunate in my petitions that it might be removed, and besought the Lord Jesus Christ thrice on the occasion, entreating him that, if it were his blessed will, it might totally depart from me, or at least be moderated in some considerable degree.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

And my prayer was not in vain; for though he did not entirely and fully indulge my request, he said to me, in great condescension, *My grace is sufficient for thee*, to support thee under these trials, though I permit them to continue, which I now choose; *for my strength is made perfect*, and illustrated so much the more, in the weakness of the instrument by which I work; and this general maxim will take place with respect to thee. *With the greatest pleasure therefore will I boast in my weaknesses*, various as they are, *that the strength of Christ may*, as it were, *pitch its tent upon me*,^g and surround me on every side. And¹⁰

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

therefore I feel a secret complacency, rather than anxiety and terror, in these infirmities, in all the injuries I sustain, in all the necessities I endure, in all the persecutions with which I am assaulted, and in all the straits which for Christ's sake press me on every part; for when I am weak, then am I strong: never do I feel larger inward communications of strength from him, than when I am most conscious of my own weakness. Nor do I esteem any thing a greater honour to me, than that Christ should take occasion to glorify himself by those things whereby I am humbled and abased.

^g Pitch its tent, &c.] That seems the strong emphasis of the original word
ἐπισηκηνώσθαι.

IMPROVEMENT.

- SECT. WELL might the apostle say, that when he was weak, then
 XIX. was he strong; for it is difficult to tell when he expresses a
 Ver. 10. greater strength of genius or of grace, than while thus discours-
 ing of his own infirmities. How glorious were those scars in
 his body which were the marks of his sufferings for Christ; and
 those tremblings and distortions of his nerves which were the
 1 results of those bright visions of the Lord which brought down
 heaven to earth, and had for the time equalled a mortal man
 7 with the spirits of just men made perfect; yea, almost with the
 angels of God!
- 3 Transported with the sacred impulse, he could scarcely tell
 whether he were in the body or out of it; but he testified that
 4 the things which he saw and heard were unutterable. Let us
 not repine that he recollected and recorded nothing more par-
 ticular concerning what passed before the eye of his mind,
 when that of the body was closed. These celestial raptures
 were intended to confirm his faith, and consequently likewise to
 confirm ours; but not to amuse our curiosity. If the earth be
 2 full of the goodness of the Lord, how much more the third hea-
 vens, where he holds his highest court! Nor shall the interme-
 diate state of souls want its proper enjoyments and blessings.
 Assuredly, therefore, believing these things, let us wait God's
 time for a more particular knowledge of them; and when called
 of him to go forth and receive this inheritance, like genuine
 children of Abraham, obey, though we know not particularly
 whither we go. (Heb. xi. 8.)
- 7 We see the danger of spiritual pride, from which even St.
 Paul himself was not secure. One would have imagined that
 such a view of the celestial world should in itself have been suf-
 ficient to have humbled him, during all the remainder of the
 longest life; and yet it is evident that God saw there was some
 danger, lest pride should be cherished by that which seemed so
 proper to destroy it: therefore was there given him a thorn in
 the flesh. And by how many thorns are the most distinguished
 Christians often pierced! Let them bless God if thereby they
 are humbled too, even though the messengers and instruments
 of Satan should from thence take occasion to buffet them.
- 8 In all our exigencies, extremities, and complaints, let us apply
 to the throne of grace, and that blessed Redeemer who intercedes
 before it, for proper assistance and relief. Nor let us be discour-
 aged though the first or second address should seem to be dis-
 regarded, the third or fourth may be successful. And what if
 we do not succeed to our wish in the immediate answer? Let it
 content us, that we may be assured by Christ of the sufficiency
 9 of his grace. In our weakness he can illustrate his strength. And

in that view too may we glory in our infirmities. For surely the honour of our Divine Master, in our deepest humiliation, ought to give us much more joy, than to see ourselves ever so much admired and extolled. “ But, O blessed Jesus, how much of thy strength must be manifested in us, to teach our vain and selfish hearts a lesson which at the very first proposal appears so reasonable, if considered in speculation alone ! Lord, increase our faith ! increase our humility ! So shalt thou have the glory in all thou givest and in all thou deniest us, and in all the struggles and trials to which thou mayest appoint us ; and in which, for thy sake, we will take pleasure.”

SECT.
XIX.

SECT. XX.

The apostle vindicates the frankness, sincerity, and tenderness of his conduct, and his visible superiority to all secular considerations, in all his dealings with the church at Corinth. 2 Cor. xii. 11, to the end.

2 COR. XII. 11.

2 CORINTHIANS XII. 11.

I AM become a fool in glorying ; ye have compelled me : for I ought to have been commended of you : for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

IT may be indeed, my brethren, that *I am become foolish in boasting* as I have done above ; but if it be so, you will consider where the blame lies. For you, by the manner in which some of you, to whom I am now speaking, have behaved yourselves, may be said to have compelled me to do it, even against my will. In which you are peculiarly inexcusable ; for I ought indeed to have been commended by you, rather than to have found any necessity of pleading with you in the manner I have done ; for I have in no respect whatsoever failed to equal the most excellent of the apostles, though I am myself nothing in the account of some ; nor indeed am I any thing in reality without the aids of Divine grace and assistance, nor would I assume to myself any glory from what that hath made me.

SECT.
XX.

2 Cor.
xii. 11.

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds.

Yet truly God has been pleased to communicate 12 of his bounties to me in such a degree, that the signs of an apostle were produced among you in a variety of most convincing miracles ; miracles by which I was not puffed up, but which were wrought in all patience, in the midst of this unreasonable opposition I met with, notwithstanding those signs and wonders, and powers, which awakened the amazement of all that beheld.

SECT. Nor did I exert these miraculous powers in chastising the irregular, but chose rather, if it were possible, to conquer by love and by benefits.

2 Cor.
xii. 13.

And you know that I conferred many benefits: *for in what one respect were ye inferior to the rest of the churches planted by the other apostles, unless [it were in this,] that I myself was not burdensome to you, by taking any acknowledgment for my labours? No, not so much as a subsistence among you at your expense. Forgive me, I beseech you, this great injury; for I think I hardly need to ask your forgiveness on any other account.*

13 For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you; forgive me this wrong.

14 Behold now, this is the third time I am ready to come to you, having been disappointed twice before. (1 Cor. xvi. 5; 2 Cor. i. 15, 16.) Nevertheless, I will not now be, in the sense I have mentioned, burdensome to you; for, God knows, I seek not your possessions but yourselves. If I can but be instrumental in promoting your salvation, and at the same time secure your filial love and affection, I shall think myself happy, though I reap not the least personal advantage from your property, where it is most abundant. *For it is not fit that the children should lay up treasure for the parents, but the parents for the children.* I therefore being your spiritual father, will communicate to you such treasures as I have,

14 Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you; for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

15 and will not desire to share yours. *For I will with the greatest pleasure spend and be spent for your souls; I will gladly exhaust my strength, and put myself to any expense too, in order to promote this; though the consequence of all should be, that the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved by you.* How unkind soever your returns may be, if you should treat me like those perverse creatures who take a pleasure in tormenting them that love them best, yet shall you still find me a sincere friend to your best interests. (Compare 2 Tim. ii. 10; 1 Thess. ii. 8.)

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

16 But I know some will be ready to object to all this; as what will not envy and falsehood suggest, where there is any interest in fixing an odium? *Let it be so: I did not indeed myself burden you, nor demand subsistence among you as my right; but perhaps it will be insinuated, that being subtle I took you in by an artifice, mak-*

16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty I caught you with guile.

17 Did I make gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?

18 I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?

19 Again, think you that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.

20 For I fear, lest when I come I shall not find you such as I would, and that I should be found unto you such as ye would not; lest there

ing others the instruments of my mercenary principles, while I appeared myself so disinterested. I answer by appealing to plain fact: SECT. XX.

Did I make a prey of you by any one whom I sent to you with any message from me, or who came to me about any business while I was resident among you? Name the man, if you can, on whom there is reason to fix any such suspicion. I defy the boldest of mine enemies to allege what must recoil on himself with so much infamy. I know that I entreated Titus to make you a visit, and with [him] I sent a brother, to keep him company on the journey. Did Titus then make a gain of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit [and] in the same steps? Did not all his actions resemble mine, as formed upon the same principles of strict integrity and generous friendship?

Again, do you think that we make any apology to you, and endeavour to amuse you with mere words, mentioning Titus's coming to excuse my own absence? In the sight of God we speak as those who know he is witness to every action and word; yea, that he knows the secret springs of affection which actuate our hearts; and we speak as those that are in Christ by a solemn profession of his religion, and should abhor any thing which might bring a reflection upon it. And all things that we say when we are endeavouring to reconcile your minds to us are not for our own sake; but [we speak,] beloved, for your edification; that by removing your prejudices against us, we may be capable of being more serviceable to you in your most important interests. For I am really distressed on this account, and sadly fear, lest by any means when I come unto you with an heart full of Christian tenderness, and with all imaginable readiness to do my utmost to comfort and refresh your spirits, I should not find you such as I could wish, and that I should be found by you such as ye would not wish I should be. I fear I shall have some work before me of a very ungrateful kind, and which I would by all means desire, if possible, by this admonition to prevent. For I am very apprehensive lest [there

2 Cor. xii. 17.

20

SECT. *should be*] contentions, arising from secret and *be debates, envyings,*
 XX. very unbecoming *emulations,*^a and growing up *wraths, strifes, back-*
 to transports of *wraths, strifes,* where there is a *bitings, whisperings,*
 2 Cor. clashing either of opinions or secular interests; *swellings, tumults:*
 xii. 20.

which will tend to produce open *reproaches* or secret *whisperings*, to the manifest prejudice of each other's character; the inward *swellings* of pride and ambition, or perhaps the open confusion of riots and *tumults*, by which your cause in general will be exposed to public contempt:

21 [And] indeed, on the whole, I am very apprehensive *lest my God should humble and mortify me when I come among you again;* so that my spirit should be even dejected and broken on account of the sad change which hath passed since I left Corinth; *and lest I should find cause to mourn over many who have sinned already, and who, though several others have been wrought upon by my admonitions, have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornications, and lasciviousness, which they have committed;* against whom, therefore, I fear I shall find myself obliged, in virtue of my office, to pass such censures as it pains and pierces my heart so much as to think of,

21 *And lest when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness, which they have committed.*

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 12. How amiable was the goodness of the apostle, in adding all patience to those signs of his Divine mission which were with so much splendour given among the Corinthians, when there were so many things to have excused, or rather to have vindicated his severity. Such meekness had he learned of Christ, such does he teach to succeeding ministers and private Christians. How disinterested was his behaviour in every part of it; 14 not seeking their substance, but their souls! And indeed, what is the greatest gain which avarice, in its most artful and successful forms, can make of the ministry, when compared with winning souls to Christ, and bringing them into the way of salvation? Who that deserves the name of a minister, would not 15 gladly sacrifice the views of worldly interest to this, and rejoice in an opportunity of spending and of being spent for this?

Yet we see that even this cannot always command the returns of love; but the love as well as the praise of men is, in com-

^a *Contentions, emulations, &c.]* All these were the natural consequences of those debates which had arisen among them; and therefore he, in a very artful manner, gives this solemn warning with relation to them.

parison, a matter of small importance. It will surely engage the approbation of God: and all the slights and injuries over which this benevolent disposition triumphs, will be remembered by him with proportionable tokens of his gracious acceptance. SECT. XX.

Happy was that prudence which made the proof of integrity so clear, and the appeal to the whole world so confident, as it here appears. So may we avoid every appearance of any thing which might beget a suspicion of sinister designs, that we may vindicate ourselves from every such insinuation, with the noble freedom of those who are approved to God and the consciences of men. To preserve this, may we always speak and act as before God in Christ, and do all things, not for the gratification of our own humour, or advancement of our secular interest, but for the edification of others. Ver. 16, 18

The ministers of the gospel cannot but be humbled when any thing contrary to the rules and genius of it is to be found among the people of their care and charge, whether they be pollutions of the flesh or of the spirit: and they may be in some instances as effectually mortified and distressed by debates, envyings, strifes, backbitings, and whisperings, as by uncleanness, fornication, and lasciviousness. But when any of these things occur, as it is to be feared that in most Christian societies, or at least in such as are considerable for their numbers, they sometimes will; let it be remembered that they happen by the permission of Providence. God hath his wise ends in suffering what is indeed so lamentable: thus humbling the shepherd, that the flock may be farther edified; that he may approve his fidelity in more vigorous efforts for reformation; and may not be excessively exalted by that better success wherewith, in other instances, God may crown his endeavours. 21

SECT. XXI.

The apostle concludes his epistle with assuring the Corinthians very tenderly how much it would grieve him to be obliged to show his apostolic power, by inflicting any miraculous punishment on those who continued to oppose him; subjoining, at the end of all, proper salutations and his solemn benediction. 2 Cor. xiii. 1, throughout.

2 COR. XIII. 1.

2 CORINTHIANS XIII. 1.

THIS is the third **BUT** I will return now from that digression which hath carried me away from what I was entering upon before. [It is] now, as I said, (chap. xii. 14.) the third time that I tell you SECT. XXI. 2 Cor. xiii. 1.

- SECT. *I am coming to you;*^a and as several cases will
 XXI. come before me on which it will be necessary
 ——— to give my judgment, I assure you I shall think
 2 Cor. myself obliged to proceed on that reasonable
 xiii. 1. maxim in the Jewish constitution, (Num. xxxv.
 30; Deut. xvii. 6; chap. xix. 15.) that *every*
word or thing admitted for evidence in the
decision, shall be established by the concurrence
of what cometh from the mouth of two or three
 2 *credible witnesses.* And you will remember
 that *I have formerly foretold you, and do foretel*
it now again, as if I were present the second time
in person; and being absent in body, but not in
spirit, I now write to those that have sinned al-
ready in any scandalous and aggravated manner,
and to all the rest, that they may take notice of
it, and be filled with a sacred awe, that if I come
again, I will not spare [you,]^b as I have hither-
to done; but am determined, by the Divine
permission, to animadvert upon notorious offen-
ders, by the exertion of that miraculous power
 3 *with which God hath endowed me. Since, after*
all the evidence you have already had, some of
you are so strangely unreasonable as to seek a
farther proof of Christ speaking by his Spirit in
me, even of the authority of that glorious and
Almighty Saviour, who is not weak towards you,
but powerful among you by what he has already
wrought,^c you may at length have such demon-
strations of it as may perhaps cost some of you
 4 *dear. For though he was once crucified as*
through a state of weakness, submitting to those
- time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.
- 2 I told you before, and foretel you as if I were present the second time, and being absent now, I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that if I come again, I will not spare:
- 3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.
- 4 For though he was crucified through

^a *The third time I tell you I am coming:* *τρίτον τῷτο ἐρχομαι.]* So the words may be taken, though I own them ambiguous. Perhaps this may intimate that this was the *third epistle* he had wrote to them, in which he had mentioned his purpose of coming, but we cannot certainly infer it. He seems here to resume the sentence he had begun, chap. xii. 14. Such interruptions are frequently in St. Paul, and in many other writers who have not a regard to an artificial dress, and do not stand to correct every little inaccuracy, but abound in quickness and variety of thought, as Mr. Locke justly observes.

^b *I will not spare you.]* It is (as Bishop Burnet very justly observes,) a great

confirmation of the veracity of the apostles, that when factions were raised against them, they use none of the arts of flattery, however necessary they might seem, but depended on the force of a miraculous power to reduce offenders; which it would have been a most absurd thing to have pretended to, if they had not really been conscious to themselves that it was engaged in their favour. Burnet on the Art. p. 62. See 1 Cor. iv. 21, note f.

^c *Already wrought.]* This may, as Mr. Cradock and others observe, very probably refer to some miraculous punishment inflicted lately on the incestuous Corinthian.

weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God; for we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

infirmities of mortal flesh which put him into the hands of his enemies, and waving the exertion of that miraculous energy by which he could so soon have rescued himself and destroyed them; *nevertheless, he now liveth by the power of God the Father*, whereby he obtained a glorious resurrection, and is now ascended to a seat of uncontrolled and universal authority. *And thus we his apostles, though we are also weak in him, and to them who regard only external appearances may seem contemptible, nevertheless, shall live with him by the power of God manifested to you in our favour, to give a kind of resurrection to that apostolical authority which may have seemed for a while dormant and dead.*

SECT.

XXI.

2 Cor.
xiii. 4.

5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves, *how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*

You examine and try me; but let me admonish you to turn the search inward, and to *examine and try yourselves*, that ye may certainly know *whether ye are in the faith*, whether ye be true Christians or not. For if you on a strict inquiry find that you are, you will therein find a proof of my being a true apostle; as it is by means of my extraordinary gift that you are become so. *Prove yourselves,*^d my brethren, whether you can or cannot stand the test. *Do you not know yourselves*, when the subject of knowledge lies so near you, and is always before your eye? Are you not sensible *that Jesus Christ is dwelling in you* by the sanctifying and transforming influences of his Spirit, *unless ye are mere nominal Christians*, and such as, whatever your gifts be, will finally be *disapproved*^e and rejected, as reprobate silver that will not stand the touchstone? *But whatever* 6 *be the case of any of you, I hope ye shall soon know that we are not disapproved, and have not lost*^f *our evidence of the Divine presence and*

6 But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

^d *Examine yourselves—prove yourselves.*] Whether you be δοκιμοι, such as can stand the test; or αδοκιμοι, such as cannot; for that is the proper import of the word which we render reprobates. The difference between παρὰζετε and δοκιμαζετε seems to be gradual: examine and *thoroughly* prove.

^e *Unless ye are disapproved.*] Dr. Guyse paraphrases the words, εἰ μὴ τι αδοκιμοι εἰσθε, “unless there be something very “disapprovable in you;” and it cer-

tainly expresses the sense with great propriety; but as the apostle supposes this to be something which would prove that Christ was not dwelling with and among them, it seems that it must be extended to the sense given in the paraphrase.

^f *Have not lost, &c.*] It seems that the possibility of losing extraordinary gifts by the abuse of them, is finely insinuated in this oblique manner; and it might, if rightly understood, have its weight with many of them.

SECT. approbation. *But I am far from desiring to produce such evidences of it as would be grievous to you; and can truly say, that I wish to God ye may do no evil in any respect, and not that we may be manifested [as] approved, by such awful methods as those to which I refer: but on the contrary, that ye may do what is good, beautiful, and amiable, that which will adorn your profession in the most effectual manner; though we should be as if we were disapproved, and upon a level with those who have no testimonials of an extraordinary mission to produce. For we are not able to do any thing against the interest of that important system of truth which God hath intrusted us with; but must strenuously act for the service of the truth and support of the gospel, and not act by personal inclinations and affections, of resentment on the one hand, or tenderness on the other.*

7 Now I pray to God that ye do no evil: not that we should appear approved, but that ye shall do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.

8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

9 I wish the regularity of your behaviour at all events, as I declared above; *for we rejoice when we are weak, or seem so by not exerting any miraculous powers to the purposes we have hinted; and when ye, our dear converts and brethren, are strong in gifts and graces, in faith and good works: and this also we wish, [even] your being set in perfect good order.*⁵ Your entire reformation would give us the greatest pleasure imaginable, a pleasure far beyond what we could derive from the most astonishing interpositions of God to chastise those that rebel against us. Therefore, upon the whole, *I write these things thus largely, being absent, that when I am present I may not be obliged to act severely, according to the divine and extraordinary power which the Lord Jesus Christ hath given me for the edification of the several members of his church, and not for the destruction of men's lives and comforts. And therefore it is that I give you this warning, in order to prevent what would otherwise be grievous to myself as well as to you.*

9 For we are glad when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection.

10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

11 *As for what remains, my dear brethren, farewell; and may all joy and happiness ever attend you. And that this may be the case, let it be*

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be

⁵ Being set in perfect good order.] This I think the import of *κατασκευασθαι*, that perfect reformation which was not yet wrought,

though something considerable had been done towards it.

perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

your great care that ye may be *perfect*, that ye may arrive at the highest degrees of goodness. May you all *be comforted* with those strong consolations which true Christianity suggests, and exhorted and animated by the instructions it inculcates. *Attend to the same thing,*^h pursue with the greatest unanimity of heart and intenseness of affection, that which ought to be the great end of all our schemes and designs, the care of glorifying God and adorning the gospel. And as you have, in some instances, seemed to have forgotten how essential it is to true Christianity that its professors should abstain from mutual injuries and cultivate unfeigned friendship, let me urge it upon you, that ye *be peaceful*, candid, and affectionate in your sentiments; *and the God of love and peace will graciously own you as his children, and be favourable with you*, and fix his residence among you. And in token of this entire harmony and endeared affection, *salute each other*, according to the custom of your assemblies, *with an holy kiss*, as a proper expression of the purest and most ardent love. *All the saints*, that is, the Christians here in the place from whence I now write, *salute you* with the sincerest affection, and will always rejoice to hear of your peace, prosperity, and edification.

SECT.

XXI.

2 Cor.
xiii. 11.

12 Greet one another with an holy kiss.

13 All the saints salute you.

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

I conclude all with my most affectionate good wishes for you; even that *the perpetual favour of the Lord Jesus Christ*,ⁱ the great Head of the church, in whom all the fulness of grace dwells; *and the constant and peculiar love of God the Father, and the most abundant communion and fellowship of the Holy Ghost*, in the richest anointings of his gifts and graces, may [*be*] *with you*, and rest upon you *all* continually, henceforth and for ever. *Amen*: may God ratify the

^h *Attend to the same thing.*] So το αὐτο φρονεῖτε should undoubtedly be rendered, rather than *be of one mind*; which in some respects might have been impossible. See my Sermon on Candour and Unanimity, p. 8; and Phil. ii, 2, and note there.

ⁱ *Favour of the Lord Jesus Christ.*] I express χάρις by *favour* here; for if *grace* be taken for sanctifying influences communicated from Christ, (which to

be sure makes a great part of the idea,) it may be less easy to distinguish it from the *communion of the Spirit*. It is with great reason that this comprehensive and instructive benediction is pronounced just before our assemblies for public worship are dismissed; and it is a very indecent thing to see so many quitting them, or getting into postures of remove, before this short sentence can be ended. Compare Numb. vi. 26, 27.

SECT. important wish, so as to answer and exceed
 XXI. your most exalted hopes.

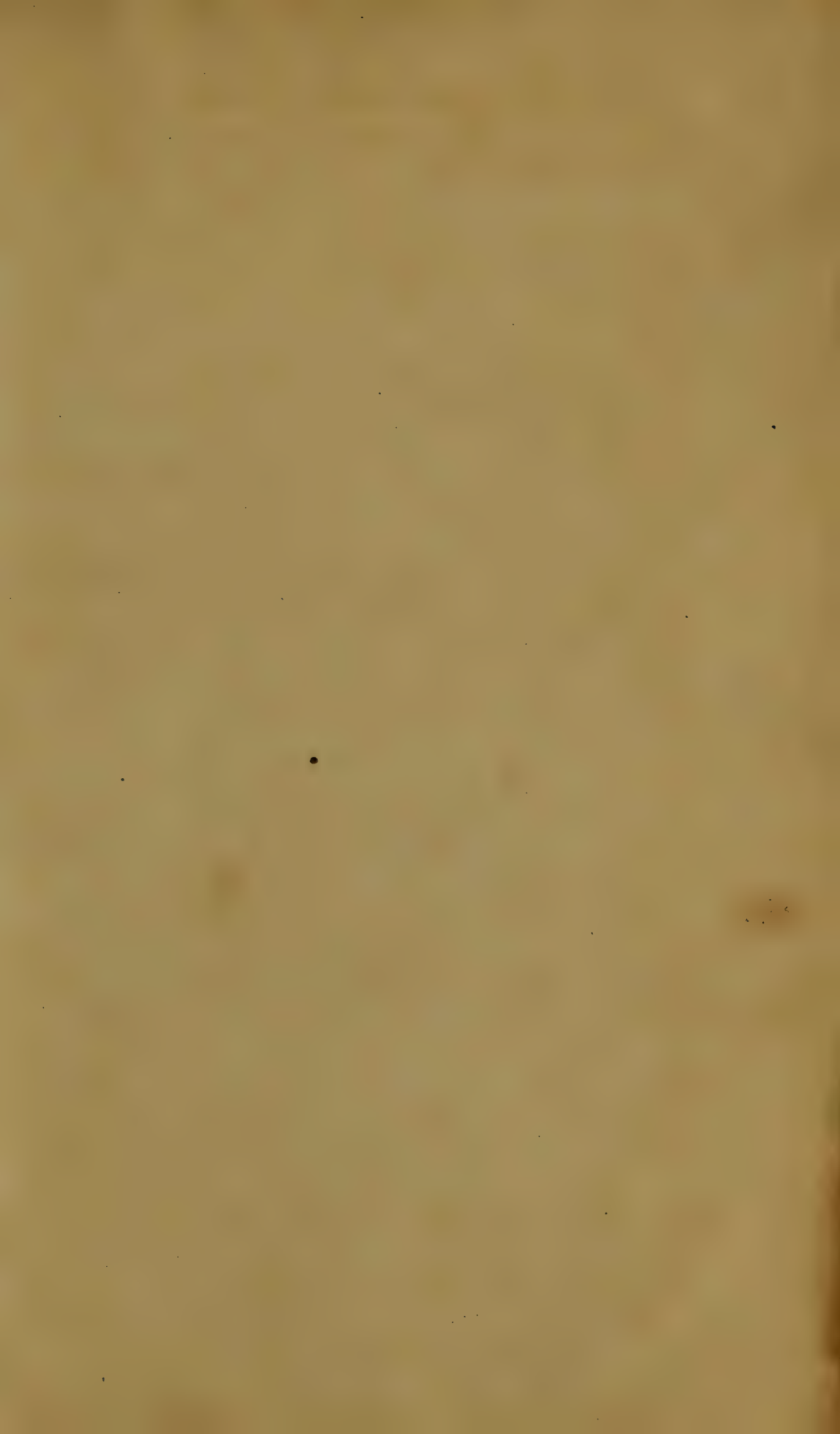
IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 4. **ADORED** be the name of that compassionate Redeemer who was once crucified as through weakness; and when he could have commanded more than twelve legions of angels to his rescue, voluntarily submitted to be seized and bound, like an helpless mortal subject to superior force, and thus led away to torture and death! He lives for ever by the power of God, by a life derived from him: may we, weak as we are in ourselves, live through him to all the purposes of the Christian life!

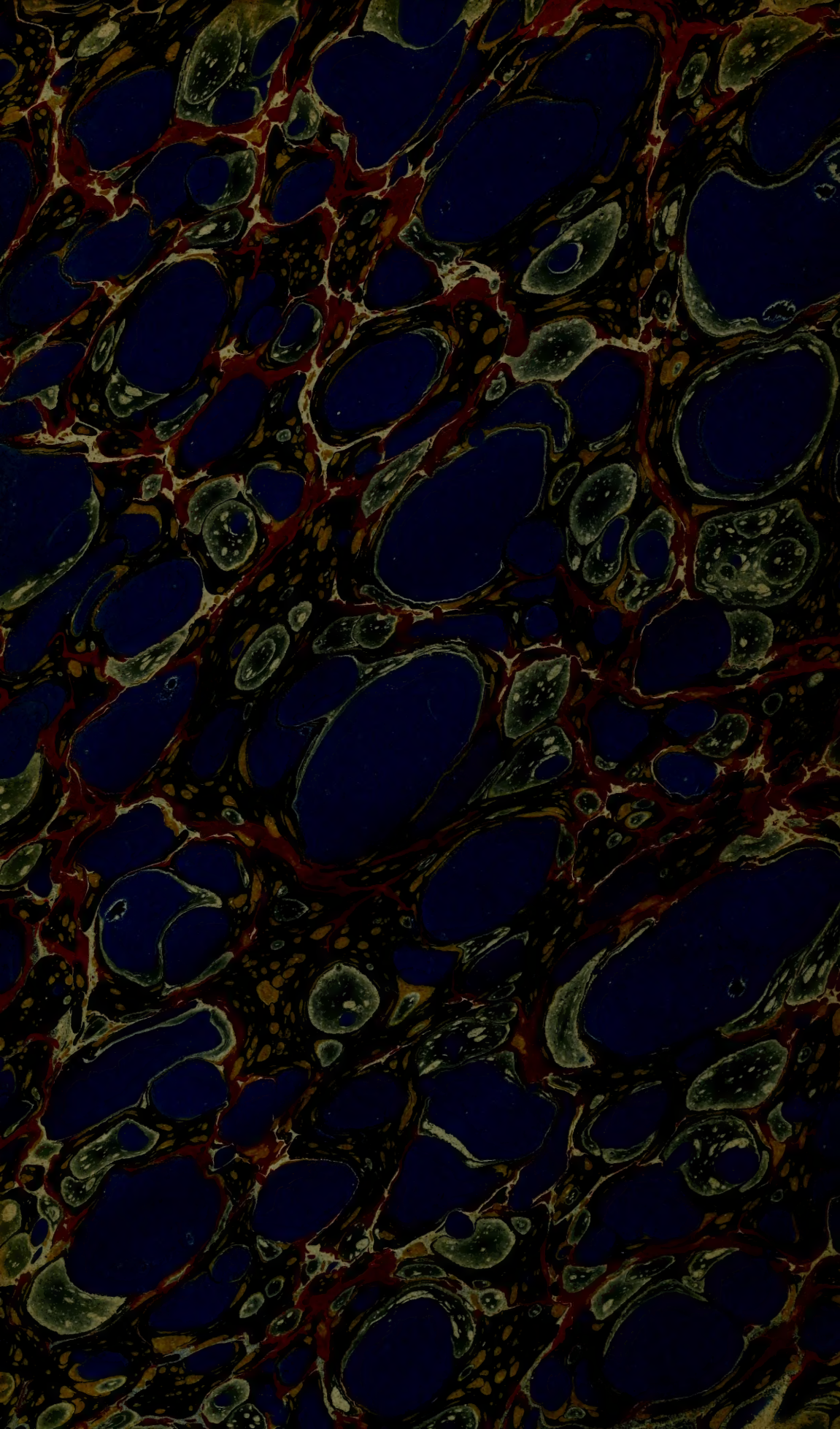
And that this life may flourish abundantly, let us be often engaged to examine ourselves; since it will be so great a scandal and so great a snare to be strangers at home. Do we not indeed, after all, know ourselves? Let us search whether Jesus Christ be in us; whether he be formed in our hearts, whether he live and act in us by his Holy Spirit: else shall we be treated as reprobate silver, shall be justly rejected of God, and no gifts or privileges will avail us. Having gained the sure evidences of sincere goodness in ourselves, we may with the greater cheerfulness and confidence pray for our brethren; and let us offer the apostle's petition for them, that they may do no evil, but every thing that is just and honourable, beautiful and lovely: never desiring to exalt ourselves on the mistakes and follies of others; but, on the contrary, wishing their perfection, and labouring to the utmost to promote it.

How charming a spirit breathes in those sentences in which the apostle takes his leave of the Corinthians! So much wisdom and goodness, that one is almost grieved that he who bids farewell in such an engaging manner, does it so soon. Let us, however, bear his parting words in mind. When ministers are leaving those among whom they have laboured, when Christian friends are separated from each other, let this be their common petition and care, that they may be improved and comforted; that unanimity and peace may prevail and increase; and that the God of peace may be with them all: that he may be with them in those happy effects and blessed operations which will be the result of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost.

13 How often hath this comprehensive benediction been pronounced! Let us study it more and more, that we may value it proportionably; that we set ourselves to deliver or to receive it with a becoming solemnity, with eyes and hearts lifted up to God, who when out of Zion he commandeth the blessing, bestows in it life for evermore. Amen.







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